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NOTES OF THE WEEK

AT last there is a ray of light in China. One of the Great Powers, Great Britain, has a definite policy. It is a sad commentary on the way in which China has been allowed to drift that the making of a policy should be so novel a departure. The document containing the British views has not yet been published, but it has been circulated to the Legations in Peking. There is no question whatever that it contains extremely liberal proposals and that it crystallizes all the arguments and counter-arguments, all the bargaining and all the complications into one very simple issue, the recognition of modern Chinese Nationalism and of the legality of almost all that it claims. It remains to be seen whether the other Powers will act in concert with Britain. For several years she has refrained from striking out independently. The Note to the Legations is a gentle hint that British patience is coming to an end.

Of the wisdom and justice of the British action few can have any doubts. The true nature of the Cantonese movement was at first obscured by the prompt mobilization of that part of the Press which sees a Bolshevik behind every disorder. The truth is, of course, that the Cantonese movement is Nationalist, not Bolshevik, and that its leaders are prepared to use any tool, even Moscow, to accomplish their ends. We have consistently advocated that Canton should be seen in its true light as the centre of modern Nationalist China. Whether it will succeed in its aims we cannot yet say, but the Government is right to take the risk. Mr. Miles Lampson has already had a long and amicable conversation with Mr. Chen, Foreign Minister of the Cantonese, and his influence and clearness of sight have been proved with amazingly little loss of time. We deal with the broader issues of this important subject in a leading article.

It takes more than a political crisis to make a German neglect his Christmas tree and his Christmas songs, so the defeat of the Marx Cabinet, brought about last Friday by an ephemeral combination of Parties—Nationalist and Socialist

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—which hate each other and are in policy diametrically opposed, is not to be seriously discussed until after the holidays. Then we shall have days, and possibly weeks, of bargaining and discussion, but it is to be hoped that at the end of them there will be a ministry determined to abolish the political activities of the Reichswehr, rumours of which do such harm to Germany's reputation abroad. The German Socialists are a cowardly lot, and if Dr. Scheidemann is driven by his conscience to make so strong an attack on the Reichswehr as he did in the speech which led to Dr. Marx's defeat, then things must be very bad indeed. In most respects the Republican regime is gaining ground, especially since Dr. Stresemann brought Germany back into the comity of nations, but there can be no stability for the Republic, and no peace in Europe, while Dr. Gessler allows the officers and men for whose loyalty he is responsible to plot for the return of a regime which they alone desire. Fortunately, Germany's foreign policy will remain unaltered, but this internal question of republic or monarchy has to be faced, and the sooner it is faced the better.

The machinery of the United States Constitution is steadily grinding out the authority to build ten new cruisers, at a cost of anything between twenty and thirty million pounds. There may be any one of three reasons for this expenditure. It may be a reply to the Japanese naval estimates which, published a few days ago, showed an increase over the previous year. Or it may be due to a growing uneasiness at America's inferiority in cruiser strength compared to Britain. The third explanation which has been suggested is one with which we cannot feel much sympathy. It is that America wishes to force Europe to hasten with disarmament by showing how hopeless it is for her to compete against the unlimited purse of the United States. Ever since 1919, Europe has been growing more and more tired of transatlantic lecturings. The first duty of every American platform orator appears to be to expose the moral deficiencies of Europe. Cruiser building hardly seems a proof of moral superiority, and if America's plan is to frighten us into disarmament, embarking on a large armament programme is a paradoxical and dangerous method of pursuing it. Is a new armaments race beginning? We all know where the last one landed the world.

The wisest remark made about the Smethwick by-election, in which Mr. Oswald Mosley, the Labour candidate, was returned by a majority of over 6,000, was made by Mr. Marshall Pike, the defeated Conservative candidate. "The main lesson," he said, "is that the conquest of the Socialist Party by the capitalist has begun." Never was a more topsy-turvy election. The successful appellant for the Labour vote was a rich aristocrat: the Tory candidate was a working man. The other point worth recording about the election is this, that it proved once more the Press Gang's lack of power to influence the public in serious matters. They tried all they knew (and they know a good deal) to keep Mr. Mosley out, with the result that the Socialist majority was

multiplied six times. It is not necessary to admire Mr. Mosley, or his tactics, or his creed, to detest very heartily the methods adopted by the cheap Press to discredit him.

The formal opening by Sir Samuel Hoare, soon after Christmas, of the new commercial air service between Egypt and India completes one more link in the chain that will presently connect us with Australia by air. The question at once arises (and has been discussed very frankly at the Imperial Conference) of the financial contributions that the different parts of the Empire are prepared to make. Will India, for instance, be willing to foot the bill for the next stage on towards Australia? India stands to gain considerably by the new service from Egypt, which will bring the air traveller to India on the fourth day after leaving Cairo. According to a memorandum which has just reached London the Indian Government is inclined to agree that the time has come when it "should accept the principle of subsidizing commercial air service from Indian revenue"; but whether that includes the Imperial service, or refers only to flights in India itself, is not quite clear. On general principles it is obviously unjust that the over-burdened British taxpayer should be expected to shoulder the whole of this additional responsibility.

Foot and mouth disease has cost this country about one million pounds per annum during the last five years. It has done so because we have never been able to discover any sure method of stamping out the deadly disease except by slaughtering all infected flocks and herds—and compensating the owners. If it be true that Colonel G. K. Walker, of the Veterinary College of Lahore, as reported in the *Morning Post* this week, has discovered some means by which the veterinary surgeon may replace the slaughterer, that is obviously an event of first-class importance. We are inclined to agree with the *Morning Post* that, at any rate, Colonel Walker should be allowed to test his theory here. It cannot do much harm, and it may do an infinite amount of good.

The decision of the Minister of Health to bring into operation on January 1 the Order forbidding the use of certain preservatives in food, sets the coping stone upon what is, in its way, quite a noble monument to the liberties of Englishmen; for the number of wealthy and influential concerns affected by such an Order must be very considerable. In future the only green peas will be fresh peas (for copper may not be used for colouring), and custard powders will no longer masquerade in the yellow uniform of eggs. Yet the necessary legislation has been passed with scarcely a word of opposition. As a matter of fact, the firms concerned have been quietly making their own arrangements to meet the altered state of affairs, and one result of the new regulations has been to throw additional work upon the public analysts. Small traders are likely to be more affected than big, and in the matter of butter and cream the general effect will be to bring the consumer nearer to the producer—which is all to the good.

The *Economist* has been conducting a very useful and timely inquiry into the affairs of a number of important British industrial companies, from which it would appear that the quantity of small capitalists in this country is steadily on the increase. In the companies examined, which own a capital of about £152,000,000, the average holding was no more than £300. That, as it stands, is highly satisfactory; but we should be wise not to deduce too much from it. We must not conclude, for instance, that wealth is any more evenly distributed than it was ten or twenty years ago, or that the standards of living in Park Lane and Whitechapel are appreciably nearer to one another. For against the growing number of smaller capitalists we have to set the increased influence of the big ones. If shares are more widely distributed, control is not. And there is, moreover, a tendency towards amalgamation which, in practice, means that all the small shareholders in several companies take refuge under the wing of one rich man who is a shareholder in all of them.

We publish elsewhere a letter from Commendatore Luigi Villari in which he takes exception to a Note in our last week's issue. His arguments based on interviews with American journalists, on the attitude of "certain organs of the British Press," and "a telegram in the London Press," hardly require to be answered. We do not base our criticism on vague reports of this kind. There is one point in the Commendatore's letter which is a little ambiguous. He says Italy has concluded more treaties of friendship and commerce in the last few years than any other Power. This may be true, but treaties of commerce are not a real test of friendly relations. Of treaties of friendship, Italy has signed since 1919 six; Germany has signed twelve, Switzerland eighteen, and Sweden nineteen. As to France, in Paris resentment against Italy is far deeper than the papers would lead one to believe, because the *mot d'ordre* given to the Press is one of calm and moderation. There is a silly rumour abroad that Mussolini's lamb-like utterances are due to his success in obtaining British consent to an Italian adventure in Asia Minor. This rumour should be denied by the Foreign Office. We learn from a most trustworthy source that France has a very large number of troops on the Italian frontier, with tanks and all modern equipment.

Nevertheless, a change for the better has undoubtedly come over the situation. No relationships are more fickle than those between Governments, and it must astonish many that Mussolini, so short a time ago threatening to cross the Brenner, is now concluding a treaty with Germany. It is even more astonishing to find the same statesman declaring to the Associated Press that an Italo-French agreement is one of the fundamental necessities of European peace. The care with which the official organ of Fascismo, the *D'Italia*, is insisting that the attitude of Italy is entirely in harmony with the spirit of Locarno and Thoiry must be taken to indicate an important change in Signor Mussolini's foreign policy. It would appear that he is now abandoning for the time being, at any rate, his war-like policy, and has hopes of obtaining by peaceful negotia-

tion those concessions from Great Britain, Germany and France which he has so often threatened to obtain by force of arms.

The exhibition of Flemish art which has been organized by the Anglo-Belgian Union and is to be open to the public on January 8, promises to be one of the most important events of its kind that has ever happened in England. The walls of the Royal Academy will be crowded to overflowing with works from very varied sources and of the first quality. A brief examination of the preliminary lists has excited our expectation to the highest pitch. From English private collections will come sixteen Rubens, two Van Eycks, including Sir Herbert Cook's famous 'Three Marys,' three Memlincs, four Metsys, six Van der Weydens, a Van der Goes (and another from the Glasgow Art Gallery) and thirteen Van Dycks. America is sending twenty pictures, all of great interest. Almost all the important European Galleries, as well as private owners, are lending pictures, and there will also be sculpture and drawings, and a series of magnificent Flemish tapestries lent by the Austrian Government. This sumptuous list is a mere extract from the mass of work. We must wish every possible success to the organizers of this great undertaking.

Social revolutions, like the British Empire, are often brought about in a fit of absence of mind. The present enormous tax on spirits was introduced during the war, with very little thought, on the pretext that a whisky and soda was the occasional luxury of the rich, instead of being (as, in point of fact, it was) the ordinary, everyday drink of a large section of the middle classes. The result has simply been to give the rising generation a taste for wine, as recent figures prove. Unable to afford spirits, they may be heard in restaurants and bachelor flats arguing the respective merits of Clarets and Burgundies with an intelligence that their parents could hardly have equalled at that tender age. In not so many years from now, if the present process continues, the English will once again be a wine-drinking nation; our grandfather's palates may be restored to us; and Professor Saintsbury may even be persuaded to complete that history of wine, which he has long contemplated writing, and of which he has already given us one or two tantalizing glimpses. It would have been wasted on the generation that is now growing middle-aged.

There may be something in the suggestion that we are on the eve of a powerful reaction towards the simple, spontaneous pleasures of a Dickens Christmas. The carefully organized hilarity of the London restaurants is typical of an over-elaboration that has gone far to destroy the true Christmas spirit. Even the purchase of children's toys has become a serious matter nowadays. They are so huge and so efficient that a Government Department has found it necessary to issue a warning to the effect that some of the elaborate electrical appliances that now masquerade as toys may administer a severe electric shock if unskilfully attached to the household current. Christmas has become altogether too mechanical. There was nothing mechanical about the festivities at Dingley Dell.

ENGLAND AND CHINA

NOT since Lord Salisbury's last administration has this country had serious trouble in China, and if there is anyone who is inclined to doubt whether the tragedy of the Great War has really purified our emotions by pity and fear (to adapt the Aristotelian tag) he has only to contrast the attitude of Europe towards China then and now to be convinced. It is a better world now, and nowhere is optimism more justified than in China. Less than a generation ago China was like a stranded whale, with demands for naval bases sticking in her flanks like so many harpoons. It was generally assumed that partition among the Great Powers was about to begin. Russia had obtained a lease of Port Arthur, and had marked out Manchuria and the metropolitan province of Pechili for her sphere; Germany had competitively seized Kiao-Chow and the province of Shantung; we had announced that the Yang-Tse Valley was our sphere of special interest; and France and even Italy had claims of their own. A particularly unpleasant amalgam of Imperialist ambition and rapacious concession-hunting was everywhere triumphant, and the helplessness of China excited cupidity without stirring a chivalrous impulse to her defence. The allied expedition to Peking at the time of the Boxer outbreak exhibited the morality of Europe at its meanest, and, if only we had had eyes to see it, revealed the ulcer in European political thought that later had to be removed by the cautery of war.

All that is changed now. Russia is no longer an aggressor, and Germany, whose seizure of Kiao-Chow was the most flagrantly immoral of all the European outrages on China, has disappeared politically from the Far East. Japan, who seemed likely to develop into the principal enemy of strong and independent Government in China, has changed her policy, convinced that the odds against her are too great, and that her best chance of influence is to help. Lastly, Great Britain has given the lead in a policy that is described as Liberal, and is certainly in the strongest possible contrast to the ideas that prevailed a generation ago. These are the outward signs of an inward and spiritual change which may fairly be put down to the Great War.

It is certainly unfortunate that just when Europe, at any rate in its "colonial" policy, has been converted from militarism China should apparently have been converted to it. When European aggression in China was at its worst, it is doubtful whether her whole army out of a population of four hundred millions had the strength of a serviceable division. There must now be at least a million men under arms in China. The vast majority of Chinese never heard of the war with Japan, but now the whole country is seething with a new nationalism, and Britain, as the foreign power with the greatest commercial interest in the country, is naturally the one who is the first to feel the sting of any anti-foreign movement. But Europe, which has just emerged from its own gigantic civil war, has no right to reproach China with her much smaller wars, especially as she has given her such object lessons in the dangers of neglecting her army and navy.

Moreover, nationalism is in the air, has been accepted by Europe as the guiding principle of her new territorial settlements, and while it is our duty to protect our interests, there is no reason why we should object to any movements of thought that will make China strong.

The main difficulty is to divine which of the conflicting forces in China are likely to prevail and make for stability. Except for the Foreign Office, and a few experts, no one in this country has been able to follow the movements of the various armies with any approach to accuracy, and the difficulty of assessing the incalculable in war is exceptionally great in a country like China, where the personal and moral factors are so obscure. But on the whole the greater likelihood of success lies with the Southern Nationalists, who in addition to holding the southern provinces have strong forces in the north, and even if complete victory eludes their armies, their ideas seem certain to become dominant. It is not for us to interfere in Chinese wars except to protect the lives of our subjects that may be in danger, but if any particular set of ideas seems likely to prevail, we should do well to make our terms with them.

Since the more direct attacks on the territorial integrity of his country ceased, the Chinese Nationalist has two grievances against all Europeans, and in particular against Englishmen, who are the Europeans whom he knows best and personally likes best. One is the foreign control of his customs. This is a real and not merely a sentimental grievance, for, as may readily be imagined, the maintenance of large armies has greatly increased the cost of Government, and as China may not increase her customs on foreign goods without the consent of all the Powers interested, it follows that the extra cost has to be borne by internal taxes and that the foreigner who pays through the customs is artificially protected. This grievance is increased by a second: namely, that the foreigner in China is not subject to Chinese courts, but in most of the treaty ports has special reserves that are completely extra-territorial. Every foreigner in China in fact enjoys much the same sort of immunity as is possessed by a foreign Ambassador in the capital to which he is accredited. When the treaties that established these privileges were made, China had a racial and cultural, but hardly a political, nationality. All that is now changed. She has learned the joys and sorrows of a sense of nationality, and it is we who have taught her. The question that now arises is, how far we can go to meet her views and make friends with the new spirit in Chinese affairs?

It seems to be generally forgotten that all these subjects were carefully gone into at the Washington Conference. The real object of that Conference was to get rid of the shadow of war between the United States and Japan. America's policy in China has always been fairly well understood. It is to avoid territorial entanglements of any kind but to maintain what is called the principle of the open door, which is a commercial form of the Monroe Doctrine. "With the existing commitments of other Powers" (so this new Monroe Doctrine might be paraphrased) "America has no concern. But she would deem it an unfriendly act if any Power by political pressure were to secure special and exclusive

privileges of trade for its nationals." As Japan at that time was credited with Imperial and commercial ambitions in China that were not consistent with this principle, there was much uneasiness lest China should become the battleground of the political differences of America and Japan on these and other matters. Accordingly, the Washington Convention met, and largely as the result of Lord Balfour's diplomatic support of the United States a new Treaty was drafted, guaranteeing "the sovereignty, the independence and the territorial and administrative integrity of China" and in particular laying down the principle of the open door and of equality of commercial rights.

But this was not the only agreement concluded at the Conference. There was an elaborate agreement in regard to the customs duties, with power periodically to revise the scale of duties. In addition there was a resolution adopted at the Conference on the extra-territorial rights of foreigners in China, and the representative of the powers agreed to "further the efforts of the Chinese Government to effect such legislative and judicial reforms as would warrant them in relinquishing, either progressively or otherwise, their respective rights of extra-territoriality."

A variety of circumstances has hindered the further progress of these and other agreements reached at Washington, and not the least important obstacle has been the civil wars of China. But these are temporary obstacles only, and do not affect the principles laid down at the Conference. It is therefore a wise stroke of policy on the part of our Government to bring forward these agreements and lay them down once more for international acceptance. To do so is not to take sides in China's civil wars, for whatever the military end of the war may be the victors are sure to press for their acceptance. It is to disarm the nationalist movement of any hostile point against ourselves or other foreigners in China, and we shall await with great interest not only the text of the proposals that have now been made, but also the news of the effect that this publication will have on the course of events in China. In the Far East the United States is our natural ally rather than Japan, for she is above suspicion of imperialist ambitions, and the mainspring of her policy, the maintenance of equal commercial opportunities in China for the trade of all nations, is also one of the fixed objects of British policy in all neutral markets. China is perhaps the greatest undeveloped market left in the world today, and if she can win through to peace, it is not easy to set a limit to the possibilities of her future development. We paid for the Napoleonic wars partly by an increased productivity due to the great outburst of mechanical invention, but also by the development of the Americas. China may, with political settlement and contentment, do the same service for the coming generation.

These, it would appear, are the ideas that animate the policy of our Foreign Office, and it is to be congratulated on its breadth of vision. It is a pity that the same compliment cannot be paid to the House of Commons, where one party attacks our policy as though it were still that of mid-Victorian days, and another, through Mr. Lloyd George, attacks it as though the Washington Treaty had never been signed.

A LETTER FROM BUDAPEST

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT]

Budapest, December 11

THE interesting features of Hungarian literary and dramatic life at the present moment are not so much its native aspects, in which its position is assured, as its relations to the art of other countries. By the Treaty of Trianon, Hungary lost not only three and a half million Hungarians and a third of her former territory but also the direct touch with other nationalities forming part of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire. To-day in Budapest one is aware of a very much more concentrated and self-centred Hungary. The Hungarian language was, of course, always dominant—it suffered no repression under the old regime—but German provided a *lingua franca* for the Empire which served a very useful purpose. It prevented art from becoming too narrowly national and gave it a touch of the cosmopolitan which was a great asset to the Hungarian people. Though every educated person speaks German, there is not now the same compulsion, and the status of German as a common tongue is likely to suffer. The young people all seem to prefer English, partly perhaps as a national protest against Austrian influences, and partly for material reasons. There is less opportunity in Hungary than formerly, and the eyes of many young Hungarians are turned towards countries overseas, though apparently with little chance of getting there.

One result of this seems to be an increase in the translation of foreign works into Hungarian. The young Hungarian literary movement which flamed up in the last stages of the war and the years that followed had its counterpart in most countries of Europe, and, as elsewhere, it has died down. Now there is a dearth of good work, and what is being produced is not very different in character from the more or less international output of the world's market in mediocrity. It is a passing phase, no doubt, for the Hungarian people have a long intellectual history. It was theirs to hold Europe against the Turk, and by dint of their own heroic efforts to be the first of the Central European peoples to free themselves from the Turkish yoke. They have kept their lamp of learning bright in the teeth of neglect. Austria never did anything for them; the pride of Vienna, the State Opera House, was given to the Viennese by the Emperor, but the Hungarian Royal Opera House was built by the Hungarian people out of money levied upon themselves.

Budapest has a range of museums which for interest compare with any in Europe, but no royal house formed their nucleus by showering gifts upon them. The collections, where they have not been the loan or bequest of Hungarian families (prominent among whom were always the Esterhazys), have been got together by the subscriptions of the people or by the help of such societies as the Friends of the National Museum. To-day the Hungarian State can afford little in the way of grants for purposes of art, and though there is much to be had in Hungary in the way of art treasures at a low figure it is a bad time for curators. Yet the museums gallantly keep abreast of the times, as witness the exhibition of the newest accessions at the National Gallery at Budapest. It has added greatly to the Gallery's fine collection of Muncaczy's works, and nobody who visits Budapest should miss it. Soon it will be dispersed into the general classification of the main collections.

The most familiar sight in Hungary is the map of the country as truncated by the Treaty of Trianon with the old Hungarian frontiers as a black mourning border. The most familiar utterance of the Hungarian people is that they are determined, in the face of a settlement which they deem unjust, not to allow their country to drift back, but to stand boldly up to

the dangers imperilling a land that once comprised twenty-two millions and now has only eight. This, however, is to touch the fringe of politics, which in this letter are best avoided. I offer no comment but place the fact on record as part of a state of mind which is likely to have a permanent influence on Hungarian art.

The Royal Opera House is enjoying a season that witnesses one triumph after another. Jan Kiepura, the new world-tenor, as the Germans called him, came on to Budapest after his Vienna successes. I saw him as the Duke of Mantua in 'Rigoletto,' and he subsequently played 'Faust.' In 'Rigoletto' he was on the best of terms with his audience, though here, as in Berlin, critics were inclined to think he was risking his future by not waiting a little longer and getting a few finishing touches put upon his singing. His answer would have been implied in the reception he was given. There is a large Polish colony in Budapest, and his own countrymen saw to it that nothing was lacking in the way of sustained applause, but the Hungarian section of the audience was not backward in its generous welcome. If most of the triumphs of the evening were his, he owed a great deal to the regular company of the Royal Hungarian Opera House.

After Paganini, Chopin. In a dainty operetta Jonő Farago had cast the life and love-affairs of Chopin, and István Bertha had woven musical illustrations out of the more reminiscent of Chopin's melodies. The libretto was by general agreement a brilliant piece of work; some controversy, however, was aroused by the score. Much of it was apt to the words and situations, but here and there it jarred, as when peasants with scythes danced a rhythmic movement to the very familiar polonaise and the comic man did a grotesque dance to the equally familiar mazurka. Against that must be set the most charming minuet scene, with music that needed, of course, hardly any adaptation, and another, a duet between Chopin and George Sand, made up of the D major nocturne and a movement from a quartette, the name of which I cannot now remember. The theme of the book gave great opportunity for Mlle. Ilonka Kovács, who took the part of Wanda, the daughter of Chopin's music master. She is new to the operetta stage, and should have a great future. The other outstanding performance was that of M. Julius Czortos as the clumsy Prince Czartoriski, which afforded ample opportunity for humour. But the haunting music was the main delight of the piece.

The outstanding Hungarian dramatist of to-day is Franz Molnár, the title of whose last comedy, 'Játék a Kastélyban,' translated into English is 'the Game in the Castle.' It is at present being played at the Hungarian Theatre in Budapest and running in German translation in Vienna Burg Theatre, and it will no doubt make its appearance elsewhere on the Continent. Of the other outstanding features of the theatre season I must mention the series of performances given by Frau Leopoldine Konstantin, who brought her German company from Vienna and played a translation of a Hungarian piece, 'Dr. Juci Szabó,' by Ladislaus Fedor, chiefly for the benefit of the large German community in Budapest. To do so was something of a challenge, and though the Germans welcomed the attempt it did not seem altogether to the liking of the Hungarian portion of the audience. Perhaps they missed the native atmosphere which was thought to have slipped away in the course of a transmutation.

The new ballet pantomime music by Bela Bartók, 'The Marvellous Mandarin,' though it took Budapest by storm, had a rough reception when produced in Cologne, Cassel and other places in Germany, where the public seemed to think it was a joke in cacophony devised for their special irritation. The composer gave a recital of his works at the beginning of Decem-

ber in co-operation with Mlle. Maria Basilides, but produced nothing new. On the other hand, a new quartette by Dohnányi has been given a first hearing by the string four, MM. Waldbauer, Kessler, Temesváry and Kerpely. The composer was certainly fortunate in his executants.

There has been a great wealth of concerts and recitals, to say nothing of choral music (some very curious and unfamiliar), rendered by the Choir of the Capital under the leadership of M. Victor Karvály. Heyfetz followed Emil Sauer, both on their own familiar ground. Madame Ada Sari, from the Scala at Milan, who succeeded Kiepura at the Opera and played in the 'Barber of Seville' and 'Traviata,' prefaced her appearance with a concert in which she gave a marvellous exhibition of *coloratura* singing in the principal airs from her repertoire.

LE CŒUR CONTENT

BY ROSEMARY BLACKADDER

IT is Christmas Eve. The rucksacks are quickly packed and the train puffs us up the valley with a dreadful groaning and rushing of steam. Up and up. Three thousand metres up, away from houses, factories and walls. Snow and trees and trees and snow and snow. The pines stand red and blue against this dazzling white, their branches still and heavy with their load. It is dark when we come to the village. We strap our skis on to our backs and lift our faces to the keen, clear air, the scent of wood smoke, frost and juniper. We follow in the tracks the snow-plough has cleared along the road. The miller's wolfhound barks at us, straining on the chain. "Grüss Gott!" shouts the miller. A whiff of incense. The church door is open and light streams out from the Krippe where a crowd of children has come to look with shining eyes at the Christ Kindchen.

"Kommet ihr Hirten." Their clear mountain voices follow us up the path. Up and up. The snow crunches beneath our feet, harsh and frosty, and the skis on our backs clatter together with every movement. We climb at a steady pace. The village lies below now and the lights show out like small sparks. Dim, striding ahead, knows every step of the way and we stumble after in the dark.

Rukko has his pack filled with Operas—Verdi, Lully, Gretry, Borrodin, one heavier than the other. "I put Prince Igor in instead of the Heinz beans; I wish to God I hadn't. It's the worst of the lot." He jerks it higher on his shoulders. All the hills are pale with the unearthly white that seems to shine upwards. The stars are as bright and prickly as if they hung from a Christmas tree. After two hours at last the lights, the lowing of cows in the outshed and the dogs barking. "Holderiooo," shouts Dim, so that the hills answer "ooo." "Grüss Gott." "Grüss Gott." The forester unbolts the huge door and grips our hands in knuckle-destroying welcome. "Fröliche Weinachten." Maria, his wife, is still busy warming and lighting up the house for us. They live in a few rooms in the lower part and take care of it when Dim is away. "Nous arrivons d'un cœur content de l'Arabie," sings out Rukko, passing under the door post, where the faded paint of three big letters, K B M still shows, Kaspar, Balthazar, Melchior.

We run to look at the tree that was planted long ago in the stretch of grass outside the verandah. It has grown too high to put a candle on the topmost branch. But we light it up with a hundred little flames, and Karen hangs its green branches with apples and nuts for the birds. But there are no birds, no deer or squirrels at this silent hour. Some holy saint or angel stepping down tiptoe from the mountain tops may fill his pockets with

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them, or Ernst and Lisel, Maria's children, stuff them into their red cheeks. They are running now, round and round the tree, singing ecstatically, "O Tannen Baum, O Tannen Baum" and "Es ist ein Reis entsprungen." Then they run to the kitchen to play with the dolls and pistols and *lebkuchen* we brought them, and we rush off up the valley on our skis, singing out carols at the top of our voices:

Conditor est Dieu non pareil
Qui fit la lune et le soleil
Et les étoiles. . . .

Our feet rush over the snow and it shakes off the branches cold and wet on our faces and on our hair.

Je lui donnai une brebis
Mon compagnon un mauvais
Rien qu'un petit mauvais
Et Margot lui donna du lait . . .

Nous courrimes de grand raideur
Pour voir notre doux Rédempteur.

The hard lines of the highest mountains are dark and rigid. The lower slopes are shining and the trees seem to rush past like white ghosts. Breathless we swing down from above the woods, flinging ourselves into the arms of the bright night.

Nous prions Marie
Et Jésus son fils
Qu'après cette vie
Nous allions
Tourer Lourirette
L'au la derriette
Tous en Paradis.

Meanwhile we come back to the warm paradise of the *Hütte*, its long, low-ceilinged rooms and rough walls hung with old maps and strange things that Dim has picked up from all sides of the world.

We kick off our boots with the snow still on them and pad about in odd slippers and stocking soles. The huge beams of the floor feel rough and friendly beneath our feet. They have lit the fire, a crackling flare of birch logs. The candles hanging from the roof are swinging still, so that the shadows of the candlesticks march across the room and back again in slow solemn rhythm. Dim has got out the salted almonds and the schnapps. Karen is piling pears and apples, russet and scarlet, on a huge Spanish plate, where a yellow-faced knight is riding across a plain of ultramarine with a plump lady watching him from beneath a giant gooseberry tree. They must surely be gooseberries, these savage fruits. But we can't see because Karen's apples cover them up in glowing piles. They are round and shiny and the glaze shines on the plate beneath her fingers. Dim has the guitar down from its corner and is singing 'Minnelieder.' He croons the words and plucks up and down the strings, seeking the chords that are in his head.

Kumme Kumme geselle min
Ich entbitte Harte din—

Maria, her round face beaming, brings up venison grilled over the fire and *Zchwetchken knödel* and red wine. When the feast is over we sit round the fire and tell stories.

"C'era una volta," begins Rukko and a procession of washerwomen and princesses, giants, men and scarlet unicorns trips from his tongue. Rukko always tells his stories with great semblance of truth. His magic carpets are made in Birmingham, his dragons never have false teeth. Karen, on the other hand, is a splendid liar and the better teller of tales. Dim, who still finds real situations more miraculous than any sprung out of the brain, will interrupt always without any apparent connexion. Apropos of an innocent bath mat he will exclaim, "D'you remember the old contessa who took cocoa for breakfast and asked you to paint her portrait?" or, more deranging still, "D'you remember the banana?" or the hut or the eggs chez Beaujolais. And he will double up with laughing and crack long, knotty fingers to emphasize the obscure joke.

So he sets us all foraging backwards. Do you remember, do you remember, making old encounters live again? The ship's cook on the *Adriatico*, the "laughless lady" and her doughnuts, the fire on midsummer's night on the sands at Ostia, the mule that ran away outside Tetuan. The tin of "British sporting rabbit" so suspiciously flecked with green that was set before us for supper in a hut on the Sierra Nevada, Eva Weidenheim's toothache that prevented her from eloping with the *maître du ballet*, Dim reading the 'Decameron' aloud to some startled Turks in a Sarajevo restaurant—a hotch-potch of tangled memories. All these crowd back and fill the room so that wherever we turn we recognize a face, a thing, long familiar.

Rukko, on hands and knees, is crouched over a sheet of yellow paper on the floor and draws on them with quick, rapid strokes; ships and hills and people and beasts. No one talks now. The fire is burning down. Its flame lights up the red and ochre of rugs and woven cushions, strokes Karen's blue dress, flickers in bright points among the copper dishes, the books along the walls, touches Dim's hair and throws a kind shadow over Rukko's absurd nose.

The chalk goes scritch-scratch on the rough paper and the clock on the wall swings the red heart at the end of its pendulum to and fro, to and fro, very quickly. Dim stretches out a long arm and stops it. What's the use of that perpetual hurrying; there and back, there and back? It's stopped.

VILLINO CHIARO

A VISIT TO "MAX"

By A. S. FRERE-REEVES

EACH time I find myself in Italy I go to see Max—or rather, I go and do not see him; for always when I get to his gate, along the blinding white road out of Rapallo, with the agaves and olive trees all dusty, and the shining sea down at the bottom curling round rocks, I have not the courage to go in. There stands the little house, set back high along the road, and inside it, I say to myself, as I pad along below in the dust and stare up at it wistful as a thirsty dog, sits Max—still sits Max, as he has sat ever since I was here last—withdrawn, serene, urbane, and completely and most beautifully unspotted by the world. I have only to ring the bell, and I shall see him, I say to myself, for I am sure he would not refuse, I am convinced he is the kindest of men. And I do not ring the bell; I never have rung the bell; because I have not the courage.

Besides, each time I have been there, the house was so very sound asleep. Not a sign of life have I seen—not the slightest sound or flutter of it, not the bark of a dog, not the murmur of a voice; in spite of the fact, with which I am acquainted, that he has a wife. I know he has a wife, and she surely must sometimes talk; and I opine he has a servant, who also surely must sometimes move from one point to another; and I cannot believe he has not a dog, if only to warn him of the approach of such persons as myself. But sleep, profound and noiseless, has each time wrapped the house and garden, and it would have needed courage amounting to effrontery to disturb that deep repose. So back each time I have gone again to Rapallo, and had tea in an hotel while waiting for the next train to somewhere else, a frustrated young man, one of a handful of dim figures scattered about a vast bamboo wilderness, drooping over their separate trays, their

mouthfuls watched by terribly attentive waiters, and page-boys, and a hall-porter; and I have thought: All this I suffer for Max. For him I expensively break journeys, and sit drooping in cane chairs. For him I become one of a band of sad guests, than whom nothing more listless, more aimless, more apparently without hope can be imagined.

On a hot October afternoon, indistinguishable from a July afternoon in England, I found myself once more walking up the road to his house. But this time I walked with assurance, with purpose and significance in every step, and stopped at, instead of diffidently passing, his house, and boldly rang the bell at the gate; for I had been sent to give him a business letter of sufficient importance for me to have received instructions to deliver it in person. And with what excitement, with what gusto, did I carry out my mission. I rang the bell and instantly there was a tremendous barking, which all, as I saw on opening the gate, came out of one dog. The house woke up with a jump; windows were opened; a servant came hurrying down. Max himself, who had begun by shutting the hall door—I saw him anxiously taking cover—came out too, being humane, on hearing how well I could not speak Italian, and there I was at last, face to face with him.

He was all courtesy; and also, once he saw he was fairly in for it and that there was no escape, all welcome. He bowed his head in acquiescence. He took the letter with an exquisite docility, put it in his pocket without looking at it, and invited me in.

We arrived on the terrace, and he took me into the little room standing all by itself on it, that room from which delight goes forth to the world. An austere little room, two sides of it windows, and a single shelf of books running round the other two sides. There was a table in the middle, and another, breast-high, against the wall. The walls were blue—the colour of the sea, but intensified; the colour it may be on some glowing day of deep summer. The books. . . .

"Will you sit down?" said Max, indicating, with that air of youthful diffidence, that effect of cherubic modesty, of untouchedness, of something white, and fresh, and clean, like a choirboy on Easter morning, which I discovered was yet another of his many charms, a chair. I sat down. "My servant," said Max, sitting down too, "my real, proper servant, has fallen down and very much hurt herself. The one you saw would bring tea not worth offering you, but what she *can* bring is biscuits, and the last bottle in the cellar of a wine I can really recommend." He went out and called the servant, and said some soft Italian words to her. Then, coming back, he gave me an Italian cigarette, the strongest thing in cigarettes I have ever smoked, and began, for what reason I have forgotten, to talk urbanely of mosquitoes. "Genoa," he said—"I suppose you have come from Genoa?—has lots of noise, which is its drawback, but no mosquitoes, which is its blessing. Even in the height of summer it has none. The coast on either side bristles with them, but Genoa remains free. People leave Genoa to get away from the noise, and go back to it to get away from the mosquitoes. One gets tired at last of scratching."

When Max chuckles, which is often, for he has all the innocent happiness of disposition of the good, his whole body shakes and ripples, and his face wrinkles and twinkles. He studied me indulgently from behind a fleck of black eyelashes. He saw, of course, that here was a whole-hearted worshipper, and even if I had not been one, he still, once I was within his gates, would have been gentle with me, and kind.

The substitute servant brought in a bottle and glasses, and we began to sip what seemed to me ambrosia. I do not drink much wine as a rule, for I do not carry it very well, but I drank this wine.

It was like melted flowers. It appeared far too delicate to go to even the weakest head, and I sipped it with confidence. Max plied me. I sipped it with increasing confidence. The confidence spread all over my body. I had been happy before, but afraid. Now I was just happy. "Tell me about London," he said. "What are they doing there? I get so out of touch." I told him about London. I told him all I could think of about London, helped astonishingly, even to myself, who listened as one apart to my loosened tongue wagging, by the wine.

Max listened, and smiled, and sometimes gurgled into laughter. "When I lived in London," he said, when he had listened enough, "I thought I must have gipsy blood in my veins, so much did I want to travel and never be chained to one place. I was filled with a longing to move, blown out by the wind of *Wanderlust*. And I wandered at last, but only as far as this place, for when I got to it I found it was not travel I wanted, it was not *Wanderlust* I had, but just to be out of London and stay where I found myself, which was here."

He looked round, over his shoulder, through the open door. I looked, too, at what he was looking at—the sea, the sky, the sun, and across the bay the lovely little headland, flung out on to the water like a little chain of emeralds, its three green hills shining in the afternoon light. Colour, warmth, peace—all that, and health. Happy Max. Possessor of perfect wisdom. For he not only knew the wise thing to do, which is, always, as even I have begun to see, to get away, to withdraw, to fly, as Matthew Arnold urges, "*Fly their greetings, fly their speech and smiles,*" but, unlike others who know it, he did it.

I went on telling him about London, and the wine made me describe Regent Street, and how it had now become a dumpy, twisted sort of Fifth Avenue; and Max nodded indulgently, and said that a lot of London's friendliness had disappeared with its dinginess. I told him of the demolished Devonshire House, and of shops and flats where once were dukes; of Mr. Selfridge, holding the residential outpost of Berkeley Square; and of what an excellent site Lansdowne House would make for a new branch of Selfridge's, with a restaurant and tea-room in the garden; and Max nodded indulgently, and said that Mr. Selfridge and Lord Northcliffe seemed to be the only persons worth a good word to Wells in 'The World of William Clissold.' He had been given the first volume of 'Clissold,' he said, as a birthday present which was to stretch over three months, and he wondered whether one wrote one's thanks three times, as each successive volume arrived. "Wells," he said, "fascinates. One looks with a dreadful eagerness for the next volume. One is rushed along headlong on the wings of his prophecies. Terrible not to be able not to prophesy." And he gurgled again with laughter, and plied me with more wine, and I heard myself saying something about Shaw. Max said Shaw was a marvellous piece of construction—efficient, rigid, unassailable, like steel girders. One could be hard and cold, said Max, and yet be a supreme artist—like A. E. Housman, petrified by the idea of death and destruction, and yet going straight ahead with an absolute perfection of poetic form.

I said—the wine brought it back to my mind—that a journalist had run Housman to earth in his donnery, and extracted a confession that he had never been to Shropshire; and Max laughed and gurgled and wondered whether Housman had got his topography from Bradshaw, or from a map. I then said that I had been reading Osbert Sitwell's novel, 'Before the Bombardment,' and Max said, "Oh, yes—he sent it to me. A foolish critic pretended with solemnity that it had got him nowhere. Where did he want it to get him? The book is a pretty piece of baroque art—conceit piled on conceit—I enjoyed

it." Not able to go all the way with Max when it came to the Sitwells, able, indeed, to go hardly any of it with him, I quoted certain passages of Osbert's novel from the point of view of disparagement, and Max agreed that they were cheap. "Also," he said, "I never fail to be shocked at drunkenness in a woman." "It's terrible," I said, shaking my head solemnly, and gripping my glass.

"And the old lady," said Max, "getting drunk and throwing her clothes into the street in front of the doctor didn't seem to me funny. Perhaps I am old-fashioned." Old-fashioned? Max? I assured him, with all the earnestness of wine, that, like the figures on Keats's 'Grecian Urn' he would certainly remain for ever panting and for ever young; and he gurgled, and said that his panting days, anyhow, were past; and I, returning to the Sitwells, said I was tired of their onslaughts on Victorian old ladies, and that one would have thought that our generation—Max bowed smilingly at this inclusion of him in my generation—had milked them dry by now; and Max twinkled and said, "Picture of Osbert, bearing two pails foaming full of Victorian milk." He would not, however, listen to the further criticism I felt well-disposed to make of the Sitwells, and declared that Sacheverell's book on baroque art was a masterpiece, and that he, personally, felt nothing but friendliness and affection even for the apes that swing with such persistence through Edith's poems.

Then, unexpectedly, and with an odd sudden solemnity, he lifted his glass and drank my health. Was this the benediction? Was this the dismissal? And I who had not yet seen, except out of the corners of my eyes, the precious books behind me on the shelf, who had only just managed to be aware of a copy of George Moore's 'Memoirs of My Dead Life,' in a rich purple cover with a white plaque on it of the George Moore Max thought he must have looked like, I imagine, when he was in the thick of the life which afterwards became dead, a copy of the 'Poems of Alfred Lord Tennyson' and of Queen Victoria's 'Letters from the Highlands,' (dealt with also, of course, I felt sure, by Max, or they would not be there), besides other treasures I was not able, sitting in the position he had put me in, to take in.

But twilight was already upon us, the quick twilight of October, surprising after the hot July day, and the sun was down behind the little headland across the bay. Also the bottle was empty. "It has been a great honour," I said, getting up slowly and reluctantly. "For years and years I have . . ." Max took my arm. "This is the least difficult way out," he said, leading me through the house, and indicating, as we passed them, frescoes of his contemporaries that he had done by way of decoration for the hall. "The easiest things I could think of on the top of a ladder," he said, still holding my arm firmly.

The last I saw of him was standing framed in his doorway in the dusk. Again that effect of innocence, of being unspotted. "I can never tell you," I began once more. "I've been very glad to see you," he interrupted, smiling kindly, "and am sorry my wife hasn't come back yet. Perhaps another time. . ."

And Max smiled again, and raised his hand in a gesture of blessing, and also of dismissal, the gesture of one who, though patient and kind, yet thinks it time one went, and I turned and walked very carefully down the path, because, out there in the air, somehow that wine which had seemed like flowers, which had seemed like all things harmless and pure, like, really, water, except that it was full of heavenly tastes, made my feet try to behave a little independently.

SCENE SHANTIES AND VERSES

(IN WHICH THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT WILL NOT BE FOUND)

BY IVOR BROWN

I—THE RUNNABLE PLAY

FIRST Broadway fell for 'Gee, Some Kid,'
And Broadway knows when Goods are Good.
Oh Boy, it's a peach, for it lifts the lid
On the Facts of Life. Be it understood
That Adults Only can Taste this Food.
A play with a message, a timely play,
A runnable play, with a Young Girl's Soul
Shown to the world, uncovered, whole,
Ye Gods, a runnable play.

Publicity men go yap, yap, yap,
'How Wild are Women?'—Interview.
Shares in the Syndicate quickly snap
With Mr. McIsrael, good and true,
The man with a high, artistic view.
A play of warrant, a human play,
A runnable play, and a mine of gold,
(For a million dollars the film-rights sold)
Ye Gods, a runnable play.

The leading lady has lost her pearls,
But she keeps a tiger in her flat.
Two of the cast are cousins of Earls,
Hunt with the Quorn and race on the flat.
Grand? But the dresses are grander than that.
A play of emotion, a pulsing play,
A runnable play with a hell-hot theme,
So the stalls will murmur, the gallery scream
Ye Gods, a runnable play.

The First Night comes, and Gossip sings
That the Countess of Ghoul is in the stalls,
With a turban made of butterflies' wings
And a couple of Late Minoan shawls.
The author takes three hundred calls.
A play with a future, a play that's smart,
A runnable play for the likes of us,
And a brace of Bishops are making a fuss,
Ye Gods, a runnable play.

Time moves on and the doubts begin,
The company trembles from star to star.
Rumours about and the brokers in,
Shareholders ask where "the doings" are.
Mr. McIsrael travels afar,
A man on the run with the police behind,
A runnable man, who does and dares
With plays and films and stocks and shares,
Ye Gods, a runnable man.

II—BLOW A MAN DOWN

Critic, you thought
To blow a man down,
Make him the merited
Laugh of the town.

Critic, you're simple,
An innocent pup,
Here comes a Giant
To blow a man up.

Giant is Gossip
With photo and par,
Critic, acknowledge
The dwarf that you are.

III—MEN, WOMEN, AND MANNERS

The He-Girls of St. James's,
They give the play a miss,
For the niggers and New Yorkers
Have richer joys than this.
The poetry of motion
Is catch as can-can's way;
A play is only civilized
And that Rot's had its day.

The He-girls of St. James's,
They cut the play-stuff out.
And go to show a knee or two
Where Jew-boys strum and shout.
But Philipkin, my Philipkin,
The Russian ballet seeks,
With his long and pallid figure
In his broad and pallid breeks.

The She-Men of Old Chelsea
Are visible afar,
They all dress just alike, to show
How different they are.
They have the sweetest gestures
And the sweetest little whine,
As they coo upon the dancing-man,
"Oh, isn't he divine?"

With fingers most exclusive
They will ardently caress,
The latest smutty trifle
From the latest little Press.
"But fifty copies printed,"
And that seems overmuch.
But Philipkin has one; he works
So hard to keep in touch.

The He-Girls of St. James's
Go swinging past the play.
The Charleston's dead and they must learn
The Congo Crawl to-day.
But fashion spins so quickly,
No wonder they're perplexed,
When it's Upper Congo this week
And Lower Congo next.

IV—LEADER OF MEN

The Mountains trembled and the Earth was torn
And Golden Trumpets rang across the morn,
When Puff, my Puff, my Pretty Puff was born.

Puff is the man who allocates the bays
What's more, he does it in advance. For days,
Before a play's produced, he lets us know
How good it is. And thus he makes it "go,"
E'er it has come. All hail, prophetic Puff,
Acknowledged Prince and Potentate of Guff.

All we must do to scale the Heights of Glory
Is to give Puff the makings of "a story."
A little cash, of course, will smoothe the way;
Trade follows Puff and Puff must follow Pay.
For twenty pounds he guarantees a Dean
Will call our drama noxious and obscene,
With minor clergy at a lesser charge.
(New priest is but old press-agent writ large.)

On then, my gallant Puff, and let it rip;
Before your crook the Fleet Street lambkins skip.
Democracy cries out for leadership.

V—SUFFERINGS

We honoured Dullard when he would essay
The fearful task of Making Shakespeare pay.
He played and lost. And, when we saw the lout,
'Twas plain that he was paying Shakespeare out.

World-famous Bibi owns a marmoset
And swears that she will "star" as Juliet.
But Critic thinks results could not be worse,
Were Monkey cast as Juliet, she as Nurse.

Hour after hour the patient queue-folk stand,
Wind-whipped, legs aching, money in the hand.
They have hard benches, I a padded stall,
Who wait not nor pay anything at all.
But oft I think, when prisoned at the play,
How long I'd wait for leave to keep away.

IN DEFENCE OF KINDNESS

By J. B. PRIESTLEY

I COUNT it among my recent misfortunes that I have not yet read Miss Stella Benson's latest novel. The other week, however, I read Mr. Hartley's entertaining review of it, and one of the passages he quoted has been haunting my memory. It ran: "Oh yes, you have plenty of ki-hindness now. . . . Oh yes, America's treacled the world over with ki-hindness. Daley's kind—democracy's always dreadfully kind. Kindness is a symptom of vulgarity." This is said by one of Miss Benson's characters, apparently a crazy and embittered old woman, and we have no right to saddle the author herself with it. Probably these are not her sentiments. But I cannot help thinking that possibly they are. I admire Miss Benson's fiction and consider her perhaps the best of all the excess-of-self-consciousness school of young feminine novelists. I do not see her, however, as the perfectly detached creative artist, and there is in the passage quoted above a suspicious gusto. Moreover, I have read Miss Benson before, and seem to remember various remarks that indicated a not dissimilar attitude of mind. It is not an attitude of mind that I can easily understand. But then, I believe in kindness. Even when it is called "ki-hindness," I still believe in it. If America is full of kindness, if democracy is always dreadfully kind, so much the better for America and democracy. If kindness is a symptom of vulgarity, then let us be vulgar. The opportunity for being both is at hand, for Christmas itself is a kindly and vulgar festival.

Nearly all our younger "intellectual" novelists seem to share this strange attitude towards goodwill. They have a common delight in lonely aristocratic persons, selfish, violent, cruel, as sociable as wolves. Their god, Mr. D. H. Lawrence, perpetually creates characters that are like wild animals in rut. All Mr. Liam O'Flaherty's personages seem to be violent creatures who are for ever tightening their jaws, grinding their teeth, and meditating murder. Even Mr. Aldous Huxley, for all his intellectual high spirits, can only find room for cruel little puppets, and has given us Peacockian comedy robbed of its geniality. The women novelists are not so much in love with violence as the men, but they are no more in love with kindness, and if anything are more resolutely opposed to it. It is strange what a passion so many serious young female novelists have always had for selfish bullying males. "Why," asked Thackeray, years ago,

"why do our lady novelists make the men bully the women?" The question is still with us. And now there are others. Why are all these brilliant contemporaries of ours so strangely lost in admiration of ruthlessness? What is it that attracts them towards cruelty, physical or mental? Why do they take care to remove their heroes and heroines such a distance from anything like good-humour? Why does one touch of kindness make the whole world sin?

I can ask these questions, and a hundred more as tedious, but I must confess that I cannot answer them. I ought to be able to answer them. I am not peering wistfully at these writers through a fog of years: they are more or less of my own generation, and have grown up in the same world. But there are times when I wonder if they really have grown up in the same world. They write as if this earth had known a thousand years as easy as a feather bed, as if no angry word had been spoken within the memory of man, as if rage and violence and cruelty and ruthless self-seeking were only to be found in a few antique fables. They would seem to have had the same astonishing experience of human relations as Kingsley must have had of English weather when he welcomed his wild North-easter and cried:

Tired we are of summer,
Tired of gaudy glare,
Showers soft and steaming,
Hot and breathless air.
Tired of listless dreaming,
Through the lazy day. . .

I can well imagine a band of ardent young spirits protesting against a world grown soft with kindness, declaring that the time had arrived when these long centuries of ease, in which not only had there been no wars, feuds, crimes of violence, but not even private quarrels and angry disputes, nothing indeed but loving words and gentle glances, must come to an end, or there would be no spirit and passion left in the race of men. I can imagine them talking wistfully of the strenuous old days when they glanced through their newspapers and discovered that employers in England were insisting on raising their men's wages, and the men were determined to work longer hours, that members of the Russian Government had said "Dear, dear!" to a gentleman who had been publicly advocating a political change, that a large crowd in Georgia had recently wept over an erring negro. Not being of an ardent or reforming temper, I shrink from joining movements, but, in these circumstances, even I would be disposed to join the band of protestants, and might go the length of working up a little quarrel in print with a fellow author, probably the first that would have happened for several generations.

The world I have known, however, has been so different that I am removed as yet by whole ages from accepting any such point of view. If America has treacled the world over with kindness, then all I can say is that my footsteps have been singularly free from all traces of this syrup. Indeed, so fantastic has been my experience that I cling to the belief that our world is not suffering from an excess of good feeling, but from a lack of it. I am one of those who have lagged so far behind that they still see kindness as an ideal in human relations, and have not yet made the discovery that human happiness is menaced by it. They try hard to be kind to other people, and

even if they met Miss Benson's poisonous old lady they would try to be kind to her. So, too, they are anxious that other people should be kind to them. Only a lunatic, a monster of pride, could possibly be infuriated by other people's kindness. It is, I admit, extremely annoying to be the victim of people's pretended kindness, but that is because you are being offered a counterfeit of something really precious. The thought of a world in which kindness predominates does not make most of us angry, it makes us wistful, for in such a world we should be able to do all manner of things that we cannot do now: for example, we should be able to spend more time reading the works of our younger and brilliant novelists, whose lonely and ruthless aristocratic personages might then prove to be better company than they are at present. As it is, I for one cannot share their creator's admiration for them.

I cannot help suspecting that behind much of this delight in violence, ruthlessness, trampling egoism, there are some little tragi-comedies of weak nerves, frustration, and injured vanity. Many of these writers, notwithstanding their excellence as literary craftsmen, have not yet escaped the childish desire—as people say—to get their own back. This is perhaps surprising in authors whose powers suggest maturity, if only because it is usually associated with immaturity. I remember that when I was a publisher's reader, going through piles of manuscripts, mostly novels, every week, I was always coming across attempts at fiction that were nothing but infantile day-dreams. In these the hero or heroine was frequently very rude to everybody, and went tearing through life like a battle-cruiser. These novels, I am convinced, were always the work of timid governesses and shy little clerks in lodgings, who were heartily sick of being overlooked and snubbed, perhaps angry because they found it impossible to assert themselves, and so every night they turned happily to their foolscap and a dream-life in which they were strong, towering, ruthless. And given the intensity and verbal force, literature can be made out of such day-dreaming, even when it is nothing but the desire to get one's own back, a childish beating with the fists on the locked door of life. But not, I think, the best kind of literature. It is significant that all the great virile writers, who have grappled closely with life, detest nothing so much as this hardness, pride, egoism. Thus, it was out of this material that Shakespeare manufactured his villains and butts, who are rapidly becoming our heroes, for you will find Iago and Malvolio stalking triumphantly through a good many of our modern novels and plays. Shakespeare would have turned that old woman who so disliked "ki-hindness" into a witch. When he and his fellows in the art want to praise anything in this life, it is precisely kindness that they praise, not realizing perhaps that the time would come, immediately after the halcyon years of the Great War, when the world would be suffering from a surfeit of gentle looks and loving speech. It is perhaps nothing better than a piece of antique mummery, now that it is apparently Christmas Eve in the world all the year round, to pretend to keep this festival, but to the handful who are still making the attempt, I offer the compliments of the season.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

- ¶ The Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW welcomes the free expression in these columns of genuine opinion on matters of public interest, although he disclaims responsibility alike for the opinions themselves and the manner of their expression.
- ¶ Letters on topical subjects, intended for publication the same week, should reach us by the first post on Wednesday.

ITALY'S FOREIGN POLICY

SIR,—In your Notes in last week's SATURDAY REVIEW you allude once more to the alarmist rumours about Italy's alleged intentions of attacking Turkey. There was of course a reason for spreading these reports during the Turco-British negotiations over Mosul, as they served the useful purpose of making the Turks' "flesh creep" and thereby inducing them to climb down. But at the present moment there seems absolutely no fresh reason for alarming public opinion needlessly. There are plenty of real causes of anxiety over international affairs without bringing in Italy, the one Power which has every necessity and every intention, as she shows both by her acts and her words, of maintaining the peace of the world. The Italian Prime Minister has again reiterated the absolutely peaceful character of his policy in an interview with an American journalist, quoted at length in the *Manchester Guardian*, which can hardly be regarded as an uncompromising advocate of Sig. Mussolini.

As for the "isolation" of Italy, of which you also write, may I remind you that Italy has concluded more treaties of friendship and commerce in the last few years than any other Power, and that her relations are of the best with almost every Power, except of course with certain organs of the British Press, who may be regarded, at all events in their own opinion, as Great Powers. Some time ago we were told that Sig. Mussolini's attitude towards Germany constituted a "danger to peace," and now we are informed with equal solemnity that the treaty with Germany which he is at present negotiating is another "danger to peace."

In your note you also allude to the strengthening of the French garrisons on the Italian frontier, but the only definite statement on the subject is a telegram in the London Press that two French battalions had been sent to Nice! At the same time both Governments have absolutely denied any real strengthening of the frontier forces. With regard to the agitation in Yugoslavia over the Italo-Albanian treaty, it already appears to be fizzling out, and you yourself admit that "on the surface" it is "an admirable document." What there may be "under the surface" I have not the foggiest idea, but perhaps you can inform me? In any case, as Italy undertakes to protect Albania, the object of the Treaty being "to maintain the political, juridical and territorial *status quo* within the orbit of the Treaties of which both Powers are signatories and of the Covenant of the League of Nations," the instrument can only be objected to by a Power desirous of violating the said *status quo*.

I am, etc.,

LUIGI VILLARI

[We comment on our correspondent's letter in our Notes of the Week.—ED. S.R.]

OURSELVES AND CHINA

SIR,—It is regrettable that an ex-Premier and one who holds still a position of authority should have delivered such a speech at Bradford at a moment when goodwill and understanding are necessary rather than unfair statements calculated to create suspicion and moreover to impede the hands of all those who wish to see preserved the amity between Great Britain and China.

Idle it is to assume that foreign intervention, especially during the long period prior to the Republic, has not been to the advantage of the Chinese, whose awakening would not have been hastened unless through the agency of British capitalists, missionaries, diplomatists. No one disputes the desire for a nation to develop its own national life, but treaties entered into long ago with the march of time may need modification or cancellation, but surely not without consultation between the contracting parties. One forgets also that a new spirit in industry is gradually becoming more alive to the fact that China is no longer to be regarded as an inferior or backward nation—on the contrary, one of vast possibilities.

Some of the keenest brains of China owe their learning and foundation for government to western civilization, and notwithstanding the utterances of men who know England well I am sure that they still feel that we are China's best friend.

Bolshevik penetration cannot be denied, but how far it will remain is another question. An alliance between Russia and China—the objective of the communists—would indeed be disastrous to the tranquillity of the East and the West.

Lord Inchcape's words are untimely, as the missionaries when unconnected with political channels have done great work and not without sacrifice or peril; at any rate, I submit that whether it be a politician or a respected shipowner, China of the past is quite different from the one to be. Limehouse is not China, and it is well to study the history of her monarchy before her passage to an as yet unstable Republic.

Finally, to say war is intended again is only propaganda. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald has reposed his confidence in Mr. Miles Lampson and others may equally do the same.

I am, etc.,

D. HALLIDAY MACARTNEY

'OTHELLO' AT KING'S COLLEGE

SIR,—Dr. Ernest Barker's kindly rebuke of my less kindly criticism of 'Othello' at King's College demands answer point by point, and I therefore ask your leave to make the retort sectional.

1. About our community of college his suggestion is as correct as his further imputation is false. It was not a memory of dreaming spires that began to close my eyes and it was no vision of the Lady Dervorguilla which made my attention unfaithful to the Lady Desdemona. The unskilful mumbling of Shakespeare's lines was sufficiently soporific. Dr. Barker defends the delivery of the King's College players, which I attacked, and obviously it is no use arguing the point. I willingly admit that the herald, whose scene was turned into a counterfeit of broadcasting, had as clear an articulation as any B.B.C. professional. But does one go to Shakespeare for a microphonic charade? The conclusion would seem to be that the piece should be re-named, Othello being only an archaism for Two-ello. Furthermore, "mumbling" is not purely a quantitative matter. There may be quite a lot of noise without it being distinct and dramatically or poetically valuable.

2. I cannot quite understand Dr. Barker's description of a King's College menu, unless it is to convey the suggestion that I had not dined with academic delicacy but had arrived, like Hamlet's father at the time of his taking-off, "grossly, full of bread." No, it was not satiety of baked meats nor application to the blood of hot, rebellious liquors that worked like poppy. As the performance began at 7.30, I came undined (proposing to sup after), and with all my faculties undimmed and perhaps rendered unusually acute by practice of fasting. It really was the King's College Players who provided, for me at least, a dish of drowsy syrups.

3. Dr. Barker comments upon all the critical tribe for their habit of writing about the performers of a

Shakespearean play and not about the piece itself. For good or ill it is the custom of journalism to write about the immediate aspect. I, for my part, assume that readers of the SATURDAY REVIEW have a vague idea as to what 'Othello' is about and some opinion of its value. The criticism of Shakespeare has attracted many of the finest minds in English letters and it is surely not necessary for the workaday critic to make laborious emulation or attack upon their work whenever he attends a production. If I did so, the Editor would make an end of my critical career—and rightly. The players are the thing.

4. A very serious point is raised by Dr. Barker's censure of my notice on the ground that it concentrated on speech and left out "the mode and depth of the interpretation attempted by the actors." About the externals of the production (namely, the modern dresses and so on) I certainly did write. But it is arguable that I should have been more explicit about the emotion and its dramatic projection. Naturally I assumed the players to be sincere; an amateur who approached Shakespeare without sincerity and merely for a lark, would deserve extremities of torment. But feeling is not the same thing as dramatic expression of feeling in terms of the theatre. The latter comes mainly by practice and experience; it is as much a technical accomplishment as playing the piano. Sincerity has no theatrical value without it, just as it has no value without sincerity. A critic does not expect young amateurs snatching, as Dr. Barker says, a fugitive hour from their studies, to be capable technicians and therefore I did not criticize the production on that ground. If I had, I could hardly have been kind. But I hold that amateur actors, however unskilful in the ordinary technique of dramatic expression by gesture, facial play, timing and pointing of lines, and so forth, should be able to speak poetry clearly and finely and should make some adequate response to the gorgeous rhythm and phrase of 'Othello.' A man who attempts to act without studying the detail of the craft should at least be able to use his voice freely and fully. Therefore I thought it just to criticize the King's College Players on their use of speech. If my criticism had taken wider scope, it could only have added one severity to another. And I must ask Dr. Barker to believe that I narrowed my notice in mercy, not in neglect or in a grudging reluctance to give pause.

I am, etc.,
IVOR BROWN

LOST MEMORY

SIR,—In "Notes of the Week" for December 18 you write: "A loss of memory which allows the loser to take upon herself a new name and personality, to take part in the communal life about her, and in every way to comport herself as a normal human being, must be a very complete loss of memory indeed."

Cases involving such losses—or rather, alternations—have been well authenticated; they are known in psychiatric terminology as "fugues." Classic instances are related in Dr. Bernard Hart's little work, 'The Psychology of Insanity.'

Thus the Jekyll-Hyde fiction is seen to be rooted in fact. The classification of Mrs. Christie's phantasy can, of course, only be effected by her medical attendants.

I am, etc.,
S. T. C.

SQUARES AND SQUARES

SIR,—It is a little surprising to find a representative of West End property like Sir Howard Frank deprecating iron railings round London squares. This is a question that has been simmering for years.

After a fine and hot summer some fifteen years or so ago, there was a serious talk whether it would not

be possible to lease a West End Square and erect in the middle of it a sort of Bois de Boulogne restaurant. The next summer was cold and wet, which effectively killed the suggestion.

One must not generalize, for there are squares and squares. Some one knows of, where, save for the gardener and in the summer an occasional nursery maid and her charge, no one is ever seen. Others, which are not only the lungs of the neighbourhood but the playing-fields of the houses surrounding them. Obviously these two do not fall in the same category.

One thing Lincoln Inns Fields have demonstrated is that an idle square may be thrown open without fear of damage or depredation by children from the poorer streets.

I am, etc.,
T. RHODE

BLACKBERRIES

SIR,—It is paradoxical to learn from Yokel's announcement in your columns that the blackberry has become a pest in New Zealand, or in any other country for that matter, for neither in England nor in America have I ever heard that they were redundant, as, for example, the prickly pear is in South Africa; though a species of that fruit is cultivated in California to be chopped up as food for certain birds.

In the United States, however, they are more highly esteemed than here, for they are cultivated to a large extent, being planted out in kitchen gardens along with strawberries, gooseberries and loganberries, and are canned also for use in winter in restaurants. There seems, therefore, a good chance for enterprising people to profit by their profusion in New Zealand to collect them and can them for export to other countries, as the notion that they are vulgar is entirely wrong.

I am, etc.,
"MULBERRY"

[Many letters are unavoidably held over.—ED. S.R.]

P's AND Q's

SIR,—Can any of your readers help me to trace the links between the modern sense of the word "humour" and the four medieval humours of the body to which it is presumably to be referred?

E. C. OWEN

SIR,—Who can tell me the origin of this delicious verse? Is there more of it? It was taught me twenty years ago by an old Oxford man. He, alas, is dead. But how he would have chuckled at the thought that it is deemed a modern development for eminent writers to be interested in sexual affairs:

David and Solomon, so say Divines,
Had many wives and many concubines;
Yet neither of them had the slightest qualms,
One wrote the Proverbs: t'other wrote the Psalms.

S.

ABELARD AND HÉLOISE

SIR,—An excellent anonymous English translation of the love letters of Abelard and Héloise was published in 1722. It has since been reprinted in the 'Temple Classics' (Dent).

T. M. P.

SIR,—In answer to R. B. L.'s query in your issue of December 18, it gives me pleasure to tell him that the only English translation of the letters of Abelard and Héloise was made by C. Scott Moncrieff, and published in 1925 by Guy Chapman.

M. STORM JAMESON

A QUOTATION TRACED

SIR,—Your correspondent, A. P. Bentham, is evidently not a Scot, as all lettered Scots at least are familiar with the lines quoted and for the authorship of which inquiry is made. The stanza cited is one of twenty-two in James Russell Lowell's poetic tribute to Robert Burns, entitled, 'An Incident in a Railroad Car.' "He spoke of Burns," the poem begins, 'And as he reads, slowly three good and tender men.' The narrative-poem attains its climax with the lines A. P. Bentham cites, but for full effect the remaining three stanzas of the poem are essential, and therefore may be here given:

But better far it is to speak
One simple word, which now and then
Shall waken their free nature in the weak
And friendless sons of men.

To write some earnest verse or line
Which, seeking not the praise of art,
Shall make a clearer faith and manhood shine
In the untutored heart.

He who doth this in verse or prose,
May be forgotten in his day,
But surely shall be crowned at last with those
Who live and speak for aye.

J. GRIGOR

[Replies to this query have also been received from Edith A. Walters, Robert Scurr, and A. A. Calvert.]

MUSIC

GLUCK'S 'ALCESTE'

THE Oxford University Opera Club, which gave, as its first production, a year ago, some remarkable performances of Monteverdi's 'Orfeo,' recently followed up this success with Gluck's 'Alceste,' a work which is hardly better known in this country than 'Orfeo.' The sequence is a very natural and proper one, for Gluck was the first composer to revert to the æsthetic ideas of Monteverdi, which subsequent composers had neglected more and more until opera in Italy had become little more than a series of concert airs and in France a stage-spectacle in which the ballet played an important part. Although Gluck's 'Orfeo,' the first work in which he definitely broke with the Italian conventions of his day, had already been produced, it was in 'Alceste' that he fully embodied the new ideas formulated in the famous dedication which prefaces the opera. This declaration of artistic faith differs in no essential point from the manifestos of the Florentine innovators or, except in its brevity and clearness, from the subsequent effusions of Richard Wagner.

There is a common denominator between these innovating composers other than an adherence to the same theories about opera. Not one of them succeeded or could, by any stretch of imagination, be thought of as succeeding in the composition of works in the accepted manner of their time. Only one of them, Richard Wagner, was a great musician, in the sense in which we apply the term to Mozart or Beethoven. Monteverdi's madrigals, full as they are of interesting experiments which make them historically important, cannot be set beside the works of the great polyphonists, Palestrina, Marenzio and our own William Byrd. According to Dr. Henri Prunières, even his operas are inferior in musical, though not in dramatic, quality to those of his forgotten follower, Luigi Rossi. Gluck, in his turn, had not half the musical genius of Hasse, beside whose melodies his airs sound clumsy and wanting in subtlety. Gluck did, in fact, write numerous operas in the conventional Italian manner and excited the contempt of Handel by

his incompetence. His failure in that vein made him face the fact that his genius must find an outlet in some new direction, just as Wagner's inability to outshine Meyerbeer in 'Rienzi,' in which he merely succeeds in being more vulgar than the composer of 'Les Huguenots,' turned his thoughts to music-drama.

It must be remembered that both 'Orfeo' and 'Alceste' were originally produced in Vienna (where, incidentally, the influence of French fashions on the Court was strong at the time) with Italian *libretti*. It was not till later that Gluck definitely settled in Paris and challenged the supremacy of Italian opera with 'Armide' and the two 'Iphigénies.' The French classic style, at once simple and stiffly pompous, suited him admirably. He had very little gift for extended melody. Even his most celebrated air, 'Che farò senza Euridice?' lacks continuity, and 'Divinités du Styx,' the only air in 'Alceste' which is familiar to English audiences, shows his weakness in this respect even more plainly. The individual phrases are beautiful and finely dramatic in their expression of the words, but they are not welded together and we feel that the whole is disjointed and short-breathed. On the other hand Gluck's management of a dramatic situation is always masterly in its simplicity and has lost nothing of its power to move us, even after a century and a half. The third scene of the first act of 'Alceste,' which is by far the best in the opera, is an astonishing example of his genius in this respect.

The version, which was performed at Oxford, is an adaptation of Calzabigi's Italian *libretto* by a Frenchman, du Roullet. The translation made by Mr. Claude Aveling for a performance by the Royal College of Music some twenty years ago was used and proved adequate, though there were some occasional infelicities in the attempt to render into English the simplicities of the French text—admittedly a most difficult task. One did not feel, for example, that "Break thou this awful suspense" was a happy translation of "Romp ce silence odieux." For the rest it must be confessed that, between them, Calzabigi and du Roullet have made a sorry mess of the Euripidean story. It is difficult for us to-day to view the play from the same angle as the Greeks, a fact which appeared when Mr. Boughton's 'Alkestis' was produced, even though the translation by Gilbert Murray gave to it a decidedly modern twist. But, unless we do approach it from that angle, the story seems psychologically wrong and even revolting.

The production was hardly more than adequate. Gluck's music requires big voices and the grand manner, which are not to be found in amateurs and minor professionals. The ballets, an important element in the opera, also require the finished technique of the classical style. We were given inappropriate caperings called "Dalcrozian," which is only a high-falutin' synonym for "physical jerks." The choruses were well and accurately sung and the orchestral playing was most praiseworthy. The performance I heard was conducted by Mr. S. T. M. Newman, an organ-scholar of Christ Church, who showed decision in handling the orchestra and kept a cool head throughout the afternoon. His only definite fault was that he took the recitatives too slowly. They need declamation in the grand manner, but they should go more nearly at speaking pace and not with the slowness which has so long been considered appropriate for the performance of "sacred" music in England. Altogether it was a courageous venture and in the event one well worth undertaking. There is little hope of our hearing this kind of work at Covent Garden, and so long as that disability exists, we cannot be too grateful to the Universities and other educational bodies for affording us the opportunity of acquainting ourselves with something more than the printed scores of forgotten masterpieces.

H.

LITERARY COMPETITIONS—43

SET BY J. B. MORTON

A. We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for the best original Christmas Carol, in not more than twenty lines.

B. We offer a First Prize of One Guinea and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for a set of six imaginary pronouncements on marriage by County Court Judges, of the kind usually reported in the Press. Pronouncements must be characteristically sententious—e.g., "Marriage is, after all, but give and take."

RULES

i. All envelopes must be marked LITERARY, followed by the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and addressed to the Editor, The SATURDAY REVIEW, 9 King Street, London, W.C.2 (e.g., this week's LITERARY 43A, or LITERARY 43B).

ii. Typescript is not essential, provided the writing is legible, but competitors must use one side of the paper only. Pen-names may be employed if desired.

iii. Where a word limit is set, every fifty words must be marked off by competitors on their MSS.

iv. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves to himself the right to print in part or in whole any matter sent in for competition, whether successful or not. MSS. cannot be returned. Competitors failing to comply with any of these rules will be disqualified. Should the entries submitted be adjudged undeserving of award the Editor reserves the right to withhold a prize or prizes.

Entries must reach the Editor, addressed according to the rules, not later than by the first post on Monday, January 3, 1927. The results will be announced in the issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW immediately following. Neither the Editor nor the setter of the Competitions can enter into any correspondence with competitors.

RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS 41

SET BY ELIZABETH BIBESCO

A. We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for a seventeenth century Epitaph by a mistress on her lover, whose infidelity she has only discovered after his death.

B. A mother, on terms of perfect intimacy with her son, disapproves of the woman he loves. He repeats to his mother one remark of his fiancée's, proving that she has both humour and understanding. We offer a First Prize of One Guinea and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for the best suggestions as to what that remark—a single sentence—was.

REPORT ON COMPETITION 41

41A. This problem produced a very large number of entries, many of them on a distinctly high level. The work of judging has not been easy, but was lightened to some extent by the fact that several competitors who sent in epitaphs otherwise excellent overlooked the stipulation that they were to be in seventeenth-century style. These went out first. Hard on their heels followed Flip, whose epitaph ended with the line:

Lord, have no mercy on him, vex him sore!

rhyming it to a word much in use in the seventeenth century, but not, so far as we are aware, on tombstones. J. Parson rhymed "lineage" with "espionage," and added a rider recommending himself to mercy on the ground that he did "not see why lineage and espionage should not rime"; but we are afraid we do not see why they should. Quite a number of great minds were struck with the single thought of making play with the verb to lie. Of these, the simplest and perhaps the best was Moriendo Vivo, with his brief, "Here lieth John Gordon." Daedalus did well with a four-line epitaph ending:

He lied, and now in death he still doth lie.

and so did P. R. Laird, with his almost identical last line:

Let him lye still in death that in life lyed.

K. M. Briggs had a good idea, but was hardly concise enough, and his closing two lines were admirable. H. C. M. deserves a special word of commendation for being the only competitor to realize that a seventeenth-century epitaph would very possibly have been written in Latin—or at all events the only competitor who dared to write it so. The best entry is undoubtedly Edward de Stein's, and he is awarded first prize. To the three others whose work, after much sifting, was left at the top, it has been found exceedingly difficult to assign an order of merit. Two second prizes are available, owing to a sad lapse among the competitors in 41B. This means that only one of the three need be disappointed. But which? It being Christmas week, the season of round games and competitions, we leave the decision (with much relief) to our readers. Will as many as possible send us their views, please? Voters are requested to register their votes for Alpha, Diana, and E. L. O., simply stating the order in which they place them. If necessary, proportional representation will be adopted in determining the result of the poll. Envelopes or post cards should be marked "vote" in capital letters, and should arrive by Monday, January 3.

Janus, I, thy mistress Joan,
Rear thee this memorial Stone:
Not, till thou wast under earth,
Understood I thy true worth.
How about Eileen? But, Mum:
Rest in peace! Until I come.

ALPHA

While you lived I loved you well
How have you my love requited?
Such a legacy to tell
Is but to be scorned and slighted.
When Death drew you from my sight
As a boon I begged He left me
But your Honour to keep bright:
Now He has of that bereft me.

DIANA

Underneath this Stone he lies
Who was the Sunshine to my Eyes.
Did he but live, I had been fain
To reprobate my Love's Disdain.
But Death, who doth my Love remove,
Strips me of every thought but Love.

E. L. O.

THE WINNING EPITAPH

Who lived two lives a double death must die.
So, in two tombs this lover false doth lie.
He might have lived within his Lady's heart
Though this sad stone should claim his earthly part.
Now he lies dead in both. Yet Death was kind
Who took his Body e'er he robbed her Mind.
So, for the bliss which, while he lived, he gave,
She still, in secret, tends that other grave.

EDWARD DE STEIN

41B. This was sadly disappointing. There were as many entries as for 41A, but not one of them was deserving of an alpha, and the majority were somewhere about the gamma double-minus mark. It was not an easy competition, but was it as hard as the average entry made it seem? Most of the competitors proved conclusively that the young man's mother was right. If his fiancée really said the kind of things he said she said, he certainly should never have married her. Arbiter was a cut above the average—but what a woman! Henry James and water. Bibi was good, but not good enough. These two get honourable mention, together with Barbara Bombastes (who was clever without being funny) and Aeronautic (who this time was too clever by half). Lester Ralph gets first prize. It has not been possible honestly to recommend anyone for a second prize, and so this award is transferred to 41A.

THE WINNING ENTRY

"There is every excuse for maternity."

LESTER RALPH

BACK NUMBERS—III

WHEN Hartley Coleridge was asked which of Wordsworth's works he most admired, he replied, "His daughter Dora." There would be some excuse for saying that the most generally esteemed of the inventions of Dickens was Christmas, the English Christmas. When Dickens died there was a story in the newspapers that some child, hearing the news cried in the slums, asked, "Then will Father Christmas die?" The anecdote is lamentably in the vein of Dickens at his worst, but it inspired Watts-Dunton to a sonnet, and the great poet who lodged with him, and who read a chapter or two of Dickens virtually every evening for thirty years, was tolerant towards it.

The SATURDAY REVIEW of that period was a good deal less sentimental. Then, as now, it disliked sentimentality, and observed the outpouring of maudlin emotion with contempt. But it knew very well that a very great writer had passed away, and it could conclude a discriminating and candid article, 'The Death of Mr. Dickens,' published on June 11, 1870, with these words: "That what he hoped to do must now be left for ever undone is a thought which will inspire many Englishmen with a sorrow scarcely less than that they would feel if a friend long known and loved had been taken from them."

Dickens indeed was, and remains, among the best loved of English writers. No one, perhaps, can love him as some of us love Lamb; the man behind the work had in him things which do not win affection, whereas Lamb was lovable through and through in his ordinary life and in his work. But Dickens alone, since Shakespeare, has given us a host of characters who companion us through our days and are more intimate than our living friends.

Reading the SATURDAY'S obituary article I am made happy by finding in it, though introduced only for contrast, the name of Balzac, for I have long thought in the immense vitality of his characters Dickens surpasses every novelist except the master of masters. Baudelaire admirably said of Balzac's persons that each was a pistol loaded to the muzzle with will: let it be said of the persons of Dickens that each is a pistol loaded to the muzzle with his or her distinctive energy. To be sure, a price has been paid for that kind of success. With rare exceptions, the characters in Dickens do not develop. But how should they, since they are so intensely themselves from the beginning? And it is just their static quality which makes them our companions. They do not rise up, in my memory at least, as creatures at some particular stage of their growth or decadence, with blurring suggestions of their past and their future, lost in the full ardour of their permanent being.

I am no Dickensian; I let years go by without opening certain of his books; and I should fail deplorably in any examination requiring from me minute textual knowledge. But except Shakespeare, Cervantes in the one instance, and Balzac, I know no other creator whose personages have liberated themselves from the tethers of plot and circumstance to move independently through the whole imaginative world. I had to read Dickens to make the acquaintance of those characters, but, the reading over, they were part of my life for ever, and I have no need to go back to the

books for them. They are in communion with me without my opening the covers of the books.

How far Dickens understood his own genius is a question to which I should not like to return a definite answer. The Saturday Reviewer of 1870 commented with some asperity on his inclination, late in life, to write as if in obedience to some set of literary principles instead of at the prompting of his exuberant genius, and I am disposed to agree with my predecessor. That apart, Dickens was apt to attempt things which were not truly his work. Coleridge, remarking on the number of extraordinary offences against morality in a certain body of Elizabethan drama, was posthumously put to shame by precise statistics, and I am not going to say how many death-beds there are in Dickens. But I am quite sure that he whose characters were native to a world of fantasy should have avoided death-beds. Death is terminus or beginning, and the people of Dickens, in their eternal now, are neither coming to the end of a journey nor setting out on one.

Among novelists alone is it possible for a man to be great without being a great writer. As a writer of prose Dickens worked on many levels, never on the highest. He overdid description without possessing those qualities of style which may make superfluous description tolerable. He overdid rhetoric. There were times when he used words as the instruments of an indecent assault on the emotions of the reader. But there is energy in his worst work, and in the better it is difficult to find a page without some happy stroke. The dialogue, for all that it is, as regards the repetition of certain phrases, almost too much in character, is often consummate. Indeed, a good many of his characters exist almost wholly in what they say. And they say such things—such fantastical, delightful, unforgettable things.

Dickens is alone in being at once the possession of the whole English-reading world and the subject of a cult. There are men and women who live in great part for Dickens, and at least one man has died of him, a belated first reading of Dickens being the death of Ernest Dowson. He is easily the most popular of English novelists, and he had dedicated to him the austere prose of Landor, the least popular of great English writers. I can but repeat what the Saturday Reviewer said in 1870: "The language of Mr. Dickens has become part of the language of every class and rank of his countrymen. The characters of Mr. Dickens are a portion of our contemporaries." For there has been, on the whole, very little change in popular or critical opinions about Dickens. Full-blooded eulogy of a Victorian can hardly be expected now. The last tribute in the fearless old fashion was Swinburne's. But it would be difficult to find evidence that in regard to essentials there has been any marked alteration in opinion as distinct from mere tone of expression. The inverted Philistinism which adores an author only if and as long as he is the property of a few admirers has never had an opportunity with Dickens, and the plain man has never felt baffled by him. Plenty of books about him have been written, but very few have challenged any fundamental contention of his chief eulogists or detractors. And, after all, since we think less of the individual books than of the characters, it would not much matter if any one book were now promoted or degraded from the position it has hitherto occupied.

STET.

REVIEWS

THE FUTURE OF ENGLISH

BY EDWARD SHANKS

Pomona, or the Future of English. By Basil de Sélincourt. Kegan Paul. 2s. 6d.

COULD anything be more important? Could any subject more comprehensively engage the attention of those who like to look into the future? A man who can read the destiny of the English language can tell what will be the destiny of the English-speaking races, which is a matter of the greatest interest, especially at this moment when we have light-heartedly abandoned the last pretence that any strict legal bond holds together the Dominions and ourselves. History may take any course. A new war may bring us together or drive us further apart. But while we and the Dominions have a language in common, a language in which a man from Macclesfield can talk without too much difficulty to a man whose family has lived for four generations in conditions totally different on the other side of the globe, that language must both reflect and influence our mutual relations.

Let us look back a little. It is just a century and a half since the American Declaration of Independence. That breach took place after our common language was fully formed, had reached at any rate a sort of maturity. More, it took place after all the forms of our common language had been amply recorded in printed literature. One can guess what might have happened if a similar breach had taken place, say, three centuries earlier. Divergences of usage would have crept in with ever-increasing rapidity until two languages existed. Their common origin would have been plain to the philologist, it might have been easier perhaps for an Englishman to learn American than to learn French, but for all that there would have been two languages.

There are, I am aware, enthusiasts, of whom Mr. H. L. Mencken is the chief and the most learned, who assert that two languages do in fact exist to-day. But Mr. Mencken's book, monumental as it is in every sense of the word (it is of a size and shape to make an admirable headstone on the grave of, say, a deceased parrot), leaves one more than ever convinced that the unity of English is still unassailed. He makes out formidable tables of differences in the common speech, differences of grammar and syntax, differences in the meanings of words. But he chiefly provokes in me the reflection that strange as these new forms would seem were they introduced into my own practice, they would seem little less strange in his. However much he may protest, Mr. Mencken writes in the same language as myself, and the colloquial speech of London does not seem to me to differ more radically from that of New York, than from that of Glasgow. Moreover, modern improvement of communications inevitably provides that such differences shall be less, not more important in the future than in the past. The language which survived the era of sailing-ships receives no important impulse towards bifurcation when a new turn of words originating in Chicago can be known and appreciated in London as soon as in Seattle.

In this we see the power of English to withstand the influence of political changes and utterly different conditions. Whether it has been or will be in the long run a blessing to the two countries to have had one language in common is another thing and depends, as regards the present, on the point of

view and, as regards the future, on a number of chances which it is not my business here to discuss. At this precise moment, our joint possession causes demonstrable inconveniences; but while it masks important differences of tradition, outlook and temperament, it does so in such a manner as to emphasize its own existence.

All this after such a violent breach as that caused by the events of 1776 and later. There is then reason for supposing that the Dominions gently slipping away will put far less strain on this intangible bond. It will continue to link together the constituent parts of what we need to call the Empire. It will probably hold America and England together, struggle as they may in the net, until they have learnt to understand one another.

This is one aspect of the future of English, and Mr. de Sélincourt might have dealt with it from this point of view. Or, as consistently with the general character of the series in which his essay appears, he might have speculated on the mechanical changes likely to be produced in our tongue by modern conditions. I confess that after reading him, I am rather in the dark as to what he has intended to argue.

It was right [he says] that an essay on the future of English should contain very little English itself. To test the mirror, watch what it reflects. The less we think about our language, the likelier we are to retain the qualities which have made it what it is; the more we study it the greater the risk of breaking that continuous impulse with which the English mind, in high and low alike, feels its way through the world, watching without defining, absorbing rather than classifying, identified with the meanings of things, not distinguished from them.

To the first sentence I would answer that it does not seem to me to be anything like right. To the second, I would say that if you are to test a mirror, you must watch the mirror with a knowledge of what it reflects. The rest of the passage is an argument, excellent so far as it goes, against Mr. de Sélincourt or anyone else writing this essay. There is much to be said for this point of view, but it should have been stated in a letter to the publisher, not printed and bound between covers.

The nearest to a positive thesis that I can detect in what most closely resembles a cruelly protracted leading article is that English can look after itself and ought to be left alone to do so. "Societies to study and protect a language," says Mr. de Sélincourt, "however admirably inspired, have an ominous, classicizing trend." This is at bottom nothing but the old doctrine of "the genius of the language," the fundamental truth of which soon becomes apparent to anyone who makes even the most superficial study of linguistics. No man by taking thought can add one word to his language or delete one. It is a thing outside deliberate control. But, that being so, shall we not deduce from it that societies to study and protect a language can never do it any harm? If the genius of the language permits them any effectiveness, it is because it is in a classicizing phase. What phase English is really now in, what developments we should expect—these are questions which Mr. de Sélincourt might have gone into with profit. There is, after all, not much to be said for a language that surrenders its virtue to a grammarian or even a whole society of grammarians. But Mr. de Sélincourt, instead of speculations useful or amusing, has chosen to indulge in a sort of ritual dance on tip-toe, chanting in a whisper his sole principle that we must be careful not to frighten the fish. It is well meant, but if anything can seriously frighten the fish this performance is as likely to do it as anything else. In other words, ninety-odd pages (however small) of advice against self-consciousness will probably produce an effect (if any) contrary to what their author intended.

ROUND ABOUT THE STAGE

Early Tudor Drama. By A. W. Reed. Methuen. 10s. 6d.

Scenery in Shakespeare and Other Studies. By D. W. Rannie. Blackwell. 10s. 6d.

Confessions of an Actor. By John Barrymore. Holden. 10s. 6d.

Scenes and Silhouettes. By D. L. Murray. Cape. 9s.

D. REED'S investigations of English theatrical "primitives" have introduced him to an extremely lively character in John Rastell. He was a true adventurer and would have sailed to Newfoundland had not his mariners determined, at Waterford, that the trip had gone far enough and that Ireland marked the limit of decently explorable desolation. Rastell was a pageant-master to Henry VIII and built the roof of the banqueting hall for the Field of the Cloth of Gold. He was also a printer, a poet, a philosopher, and an active worker for the Reformation. The absurd but fashionable suggestion that the Reformation was merely a matter of loot is once more disproved by Rastell's history, for the man took no chances of getting rich and died in poverty. What he did do was to state, in a surprisingly modern way, the case for natural law against priestly pretensions and for common honesty against clerical plunder. In the interlude 'Gentleness and Nobility' there occur the lines:

And yet ye knowe well that of phylozophy
The principles oft contraryant be
Unto the very grounds of devynite.

When our modern dramatists discuss the rights and wrongs of the scheme of things they are establishing theatrical tradition, not breaking it.

The memorial volume of Mr. Rannie's writings is named after the longest paper, which is ill-named. It should have been called 'Nature in Shakespeare,' but no alteration of title would have given it much value. Any industrious user of a 'Concordance' could have piled up this list of quotations. Mr. Rannie's remarks interspersed among the cuttings are commonplace and there is no general argument to justify the compilation. He wrote more usefully, however, of his native Scottish themes, Sir Walter and Dr. John Brown. He represented late Victorian culture of a mild and benignant kind and his papers may be studied as a change from the harshness and effrontery of the more aggressive moderns.

Why is it that actors, when writing their memories, invariably leave out what we want to know? Almost any man is as interesting when he talks about his work as he is boring when he tells us that he faced life with half-a-crown in his pocket. Mr. Barrymore chatters away about his early "nickels," but about a great player's approach to the technical side of his work he is all too reticent. Are we to suppose that the public will not have anything but trivialities from an artist or is it that the artist can rarely talk about his art? Stanislavsky recently showed that one of Europe's leading players and directors can be as great on paper as on the stage. Mr. Barrymore has not followed his example. However, he is much to be praised for one thing. He has courageously printed a letter sent to him by Mr. Shaw after his production of 'Hamlet' in London. It is damnatory and delightful and reminds us that far the best of living dramatic critics is also the greatest of living dramatists. The letter from G. B. S. is certainly one argument for buying this book, and if photographs of an actor of conventional good looks are regarded as similar arguments, one should add that the argument is repeated more than twenty times in a hundred and twenty-five pages. No reader, in short, will lay down this book

without at least a vague impression of Mr. Barrymore's appearance.

Mr. Murray is a romantic who can argue realistically when there is need. His discussion of Mr. Granville-Barker's 'Exemplary Theatre' and of expressionist productions of Shakespeare show a practical sense of the stage along with a nice faculty in logic. In this collection of essays he covers many places and persons, with a particular reference to eminent Victorians. He is happy with harlequin and likes clowns and dancers and all the motley of the painted stage. But he does not cultivate the backward glance too wistfully. He cares for history itself, as well as its aroma, and he can state a case.

THE NATURE OF REALITY

Reality. By B. H. Streeter. Macmillan. 8s. 6d.

THERE are two ways of writing theology. You can start from certain fixed "truths of Reason" and proceed by the method of deduction down the whole ladder of human knowledge, bringing all that you know about the world under the control of your major premise, and ending with the triumphant demonstration that the facts must be so, and no otherwise. This is the method of scholasticism, and has great achievements to its credit. But for us it is completely discredited. For one thing, the sum of human knowledge is too vast and too complex for any such trim systematization. St. Thomas could know all that was then knowable: only a fool would make such a claim to-day. Further, the "facts" have an unpleasant way of turning out after all to be not so: they refuse to submit to the high priori method. Some of the schoolmen tried the absurd expedient of claiming that that may be true in philosophy which nevertheless is false in theology. But theology means thinking about God—it must be concerned with the Real. *Natura non imperatur nisi parendo*—so ran the slogan of Bacon's revolution: we must start by finding out what the facts are. And, thirdly, the serene concept of "pure reason" has been badly damaged. Psychology has let the water in. We cannot admit a process of pure reasoning which is not also compact of desire and will. Aristotle's classic definition of the eternal divine activity—contemplation of contemplation, untainted by desire or feeling—is to us an intolerable conception, both metaphysically and morally. The attempt to base theology on Logic has little appeal for the twentieth century. We must rather start from concrete experience.

We moderns begin, chastened and corrected by the limitations of our knowledge against the vast immensity of the Universe, less proudly even if less hopefully, by the humbler method of induction. We seek to discover the facts about the Universe and so to work through to an interpretation. For whatever anyone means by the word God, he means at least the supreme and Master-Fact which makes sense of his experience, of the Universe as experienced by him. It is the essential function of theology to relate the strange dreams that men dream—their values, intuitions, aspirations, their outreach beyond the imprisoning present, the *amor ripae ulterioris*—to the other known facts of the Universe. Have they, indeed, a foothold in Reality? Or, rather, what is the nature of Reality which seems to present such a contradiction—the reign of inexorable determinism and the "eternity set in the heart of Man"? For that, too, is a fact; that, too, has been evolved by the processes of the Universe; and any true conception of Reality must be one that will also account for that. This involves that the subject-matter of Theology—the relation of God to human experience—if it cannot be supplied by pure logic, cannot either be sup-

plied by religious experience standing by itself. It implies History and Natural Science, Art, Literature and Philosophy, and the classic records of experience recognized as specifically "religious." To neglect any one of these is to make our view of Reality jejune.

That has only just begun to dawn on professional teachers of theology; the curriculum of our Theological Colleges is still preoccupied with archæology and a *a priori* "doctrine." Truth to tell, it is largely irrelevant. The outstanding merit of Dr. Streeter's book is to have shown the right method at work, and to have marked out the path for "any future" approach to Reality. We doubt if the actual discussion is quite so "new" as the author claims for it; but he has demonstrated to younger students the right way to tackle the problem, and his own answer to it leaves us satisfied. Dr. Streeter has, once again, put the religious world in his debt, and this latest work is a book of the highest value. We must very briefly indicate its contents.

There are two ways of knowing Reality, each complementary to the other. The true distinction, as has been said lately by a high scientific authority, is not between "matter" and the non-material, but between two aspects of Reality—the quantitative and the qualitative. Natural Science deals with the former. Only that which is measurable is patient of scientific investigation. But science gives us *only* measurements—"pointer-readings," as somebody has phrased it—not a picture, but a diagram. It cannot deal with the individual, and it cannot deal with quality. But, as we ascend the scale of life we find that when we reach the conscious level quality is the dominant category. It is value that determines conscious action. And the chief concern of men is to ascertain whether quality as well as quantity is a characteristic of Reality, and, if so, precisely what quality. (Our whole success in living presupposes some rough-and-ready, empirical affirmation.) Now, diagrams and mathematical formulæ cannot express quality for us. That depends on intuition, and it is expressed in the symbols of Art and the myth and symbolism of Religion. This—which the author calls "representation"—is the only way in which value can be known. (Obviously this is of the Kantian lineage, but avoids Kant's violent dualism and his self-contradictory conclusion—"we know that It cannot be known.")

Personality is the highest thing we know—the richest embodiment of value. There must be at the heart of Reality something which is not less than personal. So long as we realize what we are doing we need not shrink—Dr. Streeter argues—from anthropomorphic pictures of God; we can only conceive Him thus, representationally. To make God in our own image is, as history shows, a dangerous proceeding; but not so if we fashion Him in the image of the *ideal* human character. And that is the Christian claim about Christ. The facts upon which Christianity is built should be regarded as a picture—a Myth, in Plato's sense—of Reality, the quality of which is expressed most fully and most completely in the life and character of Jesus.

The author then shows that this "representation"—and specially as regards the fact of pain—is congruous with the other facts of life as disclosed, for example, by biology, by history and evolutionary psychology. For this, we must send the reader to the book itself.

It is a feat of mental fertility to have produced a book of this kind so soon after 'The Four Gospels'—a masterpiece which very many men would have been proud to regard as a life-work. 'Reality' is, we think, a very good book, and should have a very wide usefulness. It is popular in the best sense, for any educated man could follow it; and, it is written in the English language—an excellent thing in theology.

VOLTAIRE IN ENGLAND

The Young Voltaire. By Cleveland B. Chase. Longmans. 12s. 6d.

IT is impossible in a single volume to present Voltaire with any sufficiency of detail. Mr. Aldington has recently given us the framework of the career and an ingenious summary of the leading ideas. But, after all, the approach by way of chosen episode or department of literary activity is the best. Mr. Chase undertakes the sojourn in England (1726-8), and easily supersedes previous authorities. Voltaire, after his affair with the Chevalier de Rohan, found himself in hopeless case. He had committed the unpardonable sin of having been ridiculous. There was nothing left him but submission to prison or voluntary exile. Electing this last, he became imbued with, and propagated, the cosmopolitan ideal. Unfortunately for us, his life in England is transacted as behind closed curtains. It is a matter of piecing together facts and anecdotes. But there is material enough for Mr. Cleveland to reduce the anecdotes, the hearsay and slander that were like to abound, to their proper and insignificant proportions.

England had a vital effect upon Voltaire. His stay here was the turning-point of his career. When he left us his formative period was closed. In France he had been a writer of light verse and conventional plays. He returned a reformer. His logic and wit had been sharpened for wide purposes by intercourse with Bolingbroke and Pope and Swift. Previously, as Mr. Chase urges, his political attitude was largely, or altogether, dominated by his desire of popularity, and his position as regards religion was not yet settled. Henceforth he is all for the liberty and tolerance he had seen practised in England, and the deism that seemed to him inseparable from these boons. Homesickness might drive him away; and the spell of England might pall when he found that he had spread Anglomania all too well. Writing for an English audience the 'Essay on Epick Poetry,' and gathering the material for the 'Histoire de Charles XII' and the 'Lettres Philosophiques,' he had been enabled to use the comparative method and inaugurate his long campaign of cosmopolitanism. After the English pattern, he would be the free inquirer and abandon the intellectual limits imposed by the classical tradition.

It is not within the scope of Mr. Chase's excellent book to enlarge upon Voltaire's subsequent restrictions. Typically French, he had to combine as best he might his liberalism and his literary conservatism. It would never do to make Shakespeare too popular in France. The influence of the "drunken barbarian" must be checked before it became uncontrollable.

ALLEGED HUMOUR

Poems of Impudence. By E. V. Knox ("Evoo"). Illustrated by Arthur Watts. Fisher Unwin. 6s.

Strained Relations. By Harry Graham. Illustrated by H. Stuart Menzies and Hendy. Methuen. 6s.

When We Were Rather Older. By F. Downey. With Decorations by A. Machamer. Fisher Unwin. 5s.

Warriors at Ease. By Anthony Armstrong. Methuen. 3s. 6d.

THERE seems to be a feeling abroad that all is not well with our humorous verse. It has been suggested that this genial art is rather standing still, or, at any rate marking time, just now, waiting for some new man to appear. But if youth is all that is wanted there seems to be no immediate cause for alarm, so long as we have Mr. E. V. Knox. He

never gets a day older. It is a cruel fact, impossible to deny, that nearly all writers of humorous verse—indeed, nearly all humorous writers—become less humorous as the years flow on. Perhaps they cherish an ambition to appear in more serious rôles; perhaps it is just that their stock of jokes is limited and that jokes do not improve with time. But Mr. Knox is an exception. He may not be the greatest of them—speaking frankly, he is not—but the one outstanding and delightful fact about him is that he is as funny to-day as he was when he first began to write. He never loses his spirits, never falters in his wit; and this new volume of verse is as neat and effortless and light-hearted as anything he ever did. Take this, from 'The Child's Guide to France':

But being stout and true of heart,
The Frenchman does not lightly part
With money when he has a lot,
But keeps it in a chest or pot,
And do I blame him? I do not.

With the Germans the trouble is that, in spite of what happened in the war, they will persist in working so hard that they are capturing the trade of their neighbours:

A little music and some beer
Is all they need to keep them fit;
If their repentance were sincere
I think they would ease off a bit.

In fact, these child's guides to foreign nations are the best things in the book, though the cleverest management of rhyme and metre is to be found elsewhere—in 'Labour and Art,' for instance. 'Poems of Impudence' is a good general title: there is always a pleasing air of not caring two straws for anyone about Mr. Knox's wit, though as a matter of fact he has never said an unkind thing in his life. Mr. Arthur Watts catches his mood admirably; the illustrations are all so good that it is impossible to pick and choose among them.

But lest we should be tempted to think that Mr. Knox is the only one who can keep it up, here is another book from Mr. Harry Graham, who must be well on into his second dozen of volumes of collected verse. Yet he shows no sign of growing serious. Much less dexterous than Mr. Knox, rather jocular, perhaps, than witty, Mr. Graham wins fewer smiles from us, but just as many laughs. There are moods when we should even prefer him—if he would not make puns. Here is a sample:

When Milton grew infirm and blind
Like other fathers he expected
To find his daughters more than kind,
But they were selfishly inclined,
Their duties they neglected;
With ill-suppressed exasperation
They wrote each night at his dictation.

The pun occurs later, and is too horrible to quote. Mr. Graham, like Mr. Knox, is admirably illustrated.

Mr. Downey has attempted to parody Mr. A. A. Milne's 'When We Were Very Young,' with a skit on the manners of older children—in fact, of the American "smart set." The result is not particularly funny—either because Mr. Downey was not equal to following Mr. Milne's individual methods, or simply because his subject was such a dull one. Nor is Mr. Machamer in the least like Mr. Shepherd. Regarded as a parody the book (which is dedicated to Mr. Milne and Mr. Shepherd) is quite extraordinarily wide of the mark.

Mr. Anthony Armstrong's quiet humour expresses itself in prose. Like so many *Punch* writers he requires plenty of space in which to stage his leisurely comedies of army life. But give him elbow room, and he will soon create an atmosphere in which you find yourself laughing heartily at every antic of Private Pullthrough and Corporal Foresight, every hitch that occurs when General Deustakit makes his inspection. Mr. Armstrong's work is greatly improved by being put into book form. The truth is that, under the guise of a mere, amiable jest or two,

he has presented us with a very delightful picture of army life in peace time, the completeness of which can only be realized when it is all together in one book.

A KEEN GRECIAN

Leaves of Hellas. By Marshall Macgregor. Arnold. 12s. 6d.

LONDON students have asked for the printing of these pages, and they are fortunate in possessing a live teacher of Greek like Mr. Macgregor. His chapters show a wide range from Hesiod to Lucian. He revels in modern parallels and instances, and seeks after the real meaning of his authors instead of losing himself in details of style and grammar. The Greek drama occupies several chapters, a highly specialized form of art and religion which poses several problems. When, for instance, a hero is ruined because there is a divine and possibly hereditary curse laid on him, how far are we entitled to suppose that his will is free? Mr. Macgregor finds the fate of Pentheus in the 'Bacchæ' "morally shocking," because "from the outset of the play I am made everywhere to feel that Pentheus has not, to use a vulgar expression, 'a dog's chance.'" Dionysus plays with him like a cat with a mouse, and thus we get a "study sufficiently arresting in other respects, but, considered as a tragedy, a failure."

This is confining tragedy to a particular definition which may or may not be sound. It is to be noted, however, that the crime of *ἄβρις*, of which Pentheus was guilty, appears a small thing to a modern audience, and was a great matter to the ancient Greek. Further, Euripides may have been seeking to produce in his hearers just that reaction which Mr. Macgregor confesses. His plays offer direct criticisms of gods all too human, cruel in seeking revenge and eager to evade the consequences of their own behaviour. Mr. Macgregor, we gather, would not go so far as to say that, but he sees the discrepancy in Euripides between the *deus ex machina* and the human passions which come before it. The problem of the Prometheus whose opposition to Zeus is justified by Æschylus is complicated by the loss of the plays which completed the trilogy. What would the sequel show? Presumably a different Zeus, ashamed of action due to *res dura et regni novitas*. Mr. Macgregor offers an excellent justification in general of the attitude and arguments of Prometheus. His predictions were not fulfilled. They came, as is noted, from Themis, but her other name was Gaia, and Earth, though the "common mother" of all, was not so far-seeing as she might have been about the high gods. In this lecture a "his" which makes a wrong sense should go out of a quotation at the bottom of page 37. There is no certainty about conclusions from the Greek drama, but Mr. Macgregor always gives us striking appreciations, even if we cannot always follow him entirely. The serenity of Sophocles is a marked contrast to the criticism of Æschylus and the free-thinking Euripides, and we are particularly glad to see a capital chapter on the 'Philoctetes,' which a scholar recently called one of the dullest of the plays. It is one of the most interesting to students of character, and that, as the author wisely insists, is a great feature of the Greek drama in spite of its handicaps. He knows, of course, that the Iliad rises well above Greek tragedy in the love-scene between Hector and Andromache. As a model in this respect, Homer was not followed, and the 'Ajax' is no worse than other plays in its neglect of romantic love.

We note a study of Plato which, like that on Lucian, is supported by well-chosen quotations, and the book ends with a delightful account of the Greek dog. Mr. Macgregor is learned and vivid, but occasionally he forces too much out of small points. Horace is criti-

cized for taking the superficial view that Medea butchered her children. That is the main fact, and what more could he say in a passing reference introduced to note a general usage of the stage? If we were captious in like manner, we might say that Laertes, not Hamlet, made the remark quoted on page 159, and that Mephistopheles at the end of 'Faust,' Part I, did not say of Margaret, "She is lost." Every word is important here, as Margaret's actual end is in doubt.

THREE JOLLY HUNTSMEN

Nimrod's Hunting Reminiscences. With an Introduction by W. Shaw Sparrow. The Bodley Head. 16s.

Letters on Hunting and the Management of Hounds. By Scrutator. Allan. 12s. 6d.

A Hunting Diary. By N. W. Apperley. Nisbet. 15s.

SOME months ago the Bodley Head issued a new edition of Nimrod's 'Hunting Tours'; they have now published, as a companion volume, his 'Reminiscences.' Charles James Apperley, who became so famous under his pen name of Nimrod that his real name is almost forgotten, was born in 1778, and hunted with the Quorn, the Pytchley and the Warwickshire Hounds. The *Sporting Magazine*, to which he became a regular contributor, trebled its circulation in a very short time owing to his articles on fox-hunting, and the proprietor, Pittman, treated him with great liberality. It was for this paper that he took his hunting tours, and Mr. Shaw Sparrow records the fact that he was supposed to have received a salary of £1,500 a year in addition to having all his expenses paid. Pittman, however, died in 1830, and it was found that the Magazine was insolvent; it was accordingly sold. Nimrod had been paid large sums in advance, and the creditors of the paper pressed him for repayment. The money had, naturally, all been spent, and rather than face the possibility of imprisonment for debt, Nimrod fled to France, where he remained until just before his death, which took place in London in 1843. Rudolph Ackermann brought out these Reminiscences shortly after. They had already appeared serially as 'The Characters of Hunting Countries,' 'The Crack Riders of England' and 'Memories of Masters of Hounds.'

In the 'Hunting Tours' Nimrod was not always able to speak his mind for fear of offending readers of the *Sporting Magazine*; in his Reminiscences he is quite outspoken and criticizes his contemporaries in the hunting field with some freedom. Nevertheless the 'Reminiscences' are not so good as the 'Tours.' The present edition is illustrated with sporting prints, and has as tailpieces some of Bewick's woodcuts. Of even greater interest are the maps, showing meets and coverts in the shires. A more delightful book for lovers of fox-hunting it would be hard to find.

Scrutator was the pseudonym of K. W. Horlock, a West Country squire. He contributed a series of articles to *Bell's Life*, which were first published in book form in 1852. Scrutator had his own pack of fox-hounds, which he bred and hunted himself. He favoured a large hound with plenty of bone and muscle. He claimed for his hounds that in a hilly country they beat the horses for speed and in woodland would "dash and spring over the short stuff like greyhounds; fences and gates they took flying"; and he says of them "I would back any five couples out of my pack, barring the first year's entry, to find and kill their fox by themselves."

He criticizes Beckford with some asperity, particularly in the matter of kennel management. He was an admirer of Osbaldestone, and speaks of his hounds as "like their master, second to none." He relates

here his experiences while hunting, by invitation, a strange country, where the natives were not prepared to assist him overmuch, and deprecated his methods and the performance of his hounds. He taught them a lesson in fox-hunting and returned to his own kennels, after some weeks, having killed every fox he had found. The raciness and zest with which the letters are written make them extremely good reading.

The late N. W. Apperley was a grandson of Nimrod, and inherited his love of horse and hound. His experiences were almost entirely in the Welsh hills—fox, hare, otter, marten and pole-cat were in turn his quarry. His style cannot be compared with his grandfather's: it lacks the fire and nearly all the other qualities which have endeared Nimrod to so many generations of sportsmen. As a record of a life spent in the hunting field by a man who was accustomed to handle hounds himself, in field and kennel, and who was a fine horseman into the bargain, it is interesting, and for variety probably unique. Mr. Cuming, who has edited the diary, has written an excellent introduction.

A PHOTOGRAPHER AT LARGE

Memoirs of a Court Photographer. By Richard N. Speaight. Hurst and Blackett. 21s.

FIELD-MARSHALS, valets, and discontented princesses have before now given us their impressions of the great ones among whom they have moved, as seen from their several standpoints; and that of a photographer is in some respects more intimate, more human, and, in this instance, far more humorous, than theirs. As it happens, Mr. Speaight is the first of his calling to write an autobiography, and probably with the best excuse. On general grounds, we should be grateful to him for his early efforts to dissipate the "Look-pleasant" school of portrait photography (with its head-rest and its rustic seats), and, by every kind of wile (most ingenuously and amusingly related in detail here) to get the victim, be he child or potentate, to look pleasant naturally. Prince Wilhelm of Prussia failed to respond even when Mr. Speaight went down on hands and knees with a rug over him and pretended to be a grizzly bear. He was utterly intractable until the author, at a hint from the Crown Princess, "played soldiers" and marched him up and down the corridor. Sir Victor Horsley, on the other hand, characteristically put an end to Mr. Speaight's "desperate efforts to keep the conversation going," and asked to be allowed to "watch those goldfish in peace." "An almost annoyingly successful photograph resulted," we are told. With Sir Hall Caine—"The trouble was that I had the utmost difficulty in getting him to stop being at his best."

Apart from describing what may be called his routine work of visiting with a camera various royal palaces, including those of Brussels and Madrid, Mr. Speaight finds occasion to describe the trouble he got into at the latter capital for not bringing a tail-coat and topper, and some of his odder experiences: of the Nonconformist divine who wished to be photographed in his pulpit and who told Mr. Speaight to place his camera on the altar—which the author refused to do; of the lady who, for a wager, asked to be photographed in her knickers and camisole—with which request he complied: of the clergyman, who had admired his work for years, but who on seeing a nude study of two children reproduced in a paper, wrote to protest that Mr. Speaight was using his gifts "for the production of indecent pictures." The best of these reminiscences is the unconscious self-revelation of their writer, who emerges as a kindly man, not backward in his appreciation of royal and noble dignity, not by any means dissatisfied with a happy and prosperous career, and strongly fortified by a sense of humour, even at his own expense.

NEW FICTION

BY L. P. HARTLEY

Midsummer Music. By Stephen Graham. Hurst and Blackett. 7s. 6d.*Neighbours.* By Claude Houghton. Holden. 7s. 6d.*A Cornish Droll.* By Eden Phillpotts. Hutchinson. 7s. 6d.*The Infatuation of Peter.* By Katharine Tynan. Collins. 7s. 6d.

SOME books belie their titles; Mr. Graham's does not. Care-free and light-hearted, it sparkles like the waves of the Adriatic upon whose shores its characters disport themselves. English for the most part, they have visited Kastelli at the instance of Spandin, a cosmopolitan *littérateur* and know-all; a brilliant conversationalist, Mr. Graham calls him, adding naïvely: "He was a valuable unifier. He could turn a frivolous tea-party into a lecture by himself." From the examples given us we are prepared to credit him with this capacity, a gift less rare and less valuable than Mr. Graham would have us believe. Spandin's charm would not have drawn us to Dalmatia as it drew Felix Morrison, nor kept us there contemplating skin-eruptions for which the local doctor knew no cure. It was not Spandin, really, who detained Felix, but the beautiful Slavitsa, whom he hoped, in spite of middle age, to detach from the arms of Blazhenko. "You are a divine child," said he. "What I like about you is that you are religious. I don't mind irreligious men, but I think all women should be religious." Morrison takes Slavitsa out in a boat and upsets her; down to the bottom they go in a drowning embrace; Morrison seems to regard this enforced intimacy as a bond between them. But in her heart Slavitsa prefers her rich Jewish fiancé, who turns up at the last and orders champagne for everyone.

Now and again a gleam of luxury irradiates the lives of the holiday-makers; of comfort, moral, mental, or material they have none. Morrison misses this. The effect of Kastelli has gone deeper than his itching skin. The native music (which seems to continue, day and night, without cease) awakens in him vague longings. He lets his books lie idle while he longs to find a haven for his agitated, homeless emotions. He alone of the characters is dissatisfied with casual kissings and wants to continue in one stay; alone of the characters, that is, who have felt the spell of Kastelli. The Littlejoys, who were more English abroad than at home, quickly left it. But Morrison suffered because, for the moment, he was of the life of the place; its Bohemianism, its irresponsibility pierced him and awoke a chord, though not a harmony. Mr. Graham does not take his hero's disappointment seriously. We imagine that Morrison's heart was soon healed. At Kastelli everything was fugitive, fragmentary, and provisional. Mr. Graham portrays its glittering surface with a lively pen; he is not concerned with raising or answering questions, he is content to convey an effect, and he conveys it brilliantly. His mind is observant and elastic and unprejudiced, and his book has the merits which these qualities bestow. But, compared with 'Under-London,' 'Midsummer Music' is disappointing, an unsubstantial *divertissement*, lacking body and sobriety and direction. A novelist must have some personal stake in his characters, must invest something of himself in them, even at the risk of looking silly if they fail to realize his expectations. Mr. Graham merely launches his and leaves them to sink or swim as best they can. And his indifference communicates itself to us.

Mr. Houghton, on the other hand, cares too much about his creation—far too much. His hero is the

spoilt child of his fancy, whose every act is watched, every wish considered, every thought canvassed. Since this allegory of a dual nature is told in the first person (the neighbour being Victor, the narrator's *alter ego*) we are prepared for an uncommon amount of self-pre-occupation. And the man was clearly right to take himself seriously; he suffered from delusions. From time to time he heard, in the room next door, conversations between "Victor" and his friends; conversations in which Victor revealed himself as so impatient of the ordinary aims and ends of living, that his scepticism infected and morally debilitated the listener. He who had felt the call of life so strongly that all careers seemed open to him became, under the insidious influence of the voice from next door, totally unfitted for life and mistrustful of it. Visions, some of great force and beauty, visit him, his consciousness begins to sicken and dissolve. As his panic increases he resolves to do away with Victor, the author of his miseries. Considering upon what a high loud note the story began, it was no mean achievement to make it end on a higher, louder note. Undoubtedly Mr. Houghton has a gift for letting himself go, and though he sometimes mistakes the glare of the footlights for the sacred glow of the imagination, there are moments when his frenzy is fine as well as large. But on the whole his book gives an effect of strain and hysteria rather than of passion.

Also autobiographical in form, 'A Cornish Droll' is the history of a life, not the analysis of a state of mind. Bill Chirgwin is a simple, good-natured Cornishman haunted by an alluring but inconstant wife. Mercy Jane was glad enough to marry him, but she only returns to him when, owing to some valiant deed reported in the newspapers, fame and fortune are temporarily his. Still she returns oftener than one would expect, oftener than a man less prone to doughty exploits than William could have hoped for. In fire or shipwreck, wherever calamity was abroad, he never failed to distinguish himself, and his distinction never failed (till the end, when she had been living for some years with an actor) to bring back his wandering wife. At last, to fend off this recurrent prodigal spouse, he took another, more home-keeping partner. Chirgwin is a likable fellow, though he sometimes talks as if his main purpose in life was to revive old Cornish idioms. But present or absent, faithful or unfaithful, Mercy Jane is never a very convincing character. As usual, Mr. Phillpotts conceals under an apparent relish for the humours and sentimental attitudes of life a profoundly unsentimental point of view. Chirgwin, for all his acts of heroism and quixotic generosity, is not at all the kind old countryman of certain Victorian engravings. He is like a windmill, firm and friendly and to some modern eyes a little too picturesque, but, like the windmill, he is a measure of mutability, a point at which the invisible currents of life become visible, revealing their strength, their capriciousness and their evanescence. Mr. Phillpotts writes too much always to do himself justice. In this book, by the injudicious piling up of marvels he almost turns Chirgwin from a figure into a figure of fun. But he never loses his power of estimating what relative shock, what relative scar, this or that occurrence will leave on a human life. His sense of proportion is careless but inspired, and it never wholly deserts him.

Unfortunately, it does desert Miss Katharine Tynan. Here is a story which sets out to portray the disastrous influence, on a young man left slightly neurasthenic by the war, of a middle-aged Frenchwoman of the bourgeois class, at whose house he is staying as guest and student. Anyone who has fought in the war has a strong, indeed a perilously strong, claim on her affections. She is domineering and possessive and liable to occasional nervous explosions. The way she wins the young man's confidence, by coddling him and playing on his anxiety about his health, is ingeni-

ous and convincing; much of the detail is excellent, and the story, particularly in the earlier chapters, is well told. And the book has a charming simplicity and an unaffected elevation of sentiment. But the characters are not alive, and the central situation could never have developed as Miss Tynan makes it. All things considered, her brainstorm was one of Mme. Patourel's most endearing characteristics; why should they have alienated the young man when her cruelty to Cécile did not?

OTHER NOVELS

Days of Disillusions. By Chester Francis Cobb. Allen and Unwin. 6s.

Mr. Cobb may at least be congratulated on having invented a new method in novel writing. This book consists of six chapters, each of which is devoted to a day in the life of a young Australian. The events of the day are minutely described, and the youth's reactions to them are analysed with a candour and minuteness that are almost pitiless. The end of each period registers the loss of some illusion. At the outset we find the child's confidence in a domestic servant rudely shaken. (There are *some* things, it appears, that Marie does not know.) Later the illusions that "all girls are negative and innocent of thought about the forces of physical creation" has to be abandoned in the light of a new experience. And so on, through the subsequent stages of life. Neither love nor success in business bring to him the happiness he had anticipated. He is perplexed and baffled by the meaning of it all. "Great Master Life, help me to understand!" That is the note on which the book closes. It is a novel that is scarcely calculated to minister to the complacency of the reader, but its courage and its fidelity to the facts of life lift it far above the rut of much contemporary fiction.

The Cathra Mystery. By Adam Gordon Macleod. Harrap. 7s. 6d.

Probability was said by Bishop Butler to be the guide of life. A really resolute novelist, however, will refuse to be handicapped by the merely probable. Mr. Macleod is a really resolute novelist. He knows that there are two subjects which have an unfailing allurements for the average novel-reader—love and crime—and he has handed out a generous supply of both in this story. When, in chapter one, David Lyon Euart reads in the personal columns of a daily paper that if he will communicate with a certain firm of London solicitors "he will hear of something to his advantage," we feel instinctively that David Lyon Euart is in for a hectic time. Nor are we disappointed. Mystery succeeds to mystery with an almost bewildering rapidity, and the course of true love is subject to a number of fluctuations. In the last sentence of the last chapter, however, the triumphant hero crushes the "unresisting body" of the heroine in his arms. Endowed with a prescience that is almost uncanny, we knew that something of the kind would happen, sooner or later. 'The Cathra Mystery' is by no means a bad novel for a winter night over a comfortable fire.

SHORTER NOTICES

Liliorum Hortulus. By C. H. Garland. Cambridge University Press. 7s. 6d.

A LEARNED Press should give us those things of little commercial value which are not likely to appear elsewhere, and we welcome from Cambridge Mr. Garland's elegant collection of Latin verses in various metres. It is dedicated to H. F. Fox, who used to judge the verse competitions in the alas! defunct *Weekly Westminster*, and we are not surprised to gather that

Mr. Garland has often justified his name in that arena. He includes pieces already familiar to scholars in the versions of first-rate hands and holds his own very well. He gets round difficulties with ease, and has a fine sense of the greater directness of Latin as opposed to the vagueness of English. Idiom charms us, as does the occasional departure from the Ovidian rhythm and rules. Schoolmasters should note that several easy pieces are included, as the *Westminster* way often led to phrases and ideas which would surely be strange to a Latin writer. As a specimen of Mr. Garland's quality we give this quatrain:

"Roses have thorns" the haughty say,
And proudly tilt their noses;
But wiser far the humble, they
Thank God that thorns have roses.

It is rendered:

Quod rosa fert spinas quereris floremque superbus
suspendis naso, Pontilliane, tuo.
Plus quanto sapit Eucolides! "dis gratia" clamat
"qui dederint spinis posse tulisse rosam."

Besides the usual elegiacs and hexameters we notice lyrics and two pieces in Greek. Blake's lines beginning "Whether on Ida's shady brow" seem more suitable for a shorter metre than elegiacs. Mr. Garland fills out the sense skilfully, but he would, we think, have done better with Alcaics.

Pages in Waiting. By James Milne. The Bodley Head. 6s.

IN this book Mr. James Milne discourses—superficially, perhaps, but pleasantly, all the same—on a variety of subjects, mainly literary. They range from the poetry of Gerald Massey, which is in danger of being forgotten, to the letters of Queen Victoria, which are equally in danger of being remembered. One page is devoted to a recapitulation of the views of Sir Harry Lauder on the subject of Robert Burns—who, save for the fact that he was a Scotsman, could have little in common with his eulogist; another consists for the most part of a series of extracts from the lyrics of the late Sir William Gilbert. Mr. Milne has a distinct *flair* for literary gossip, with an occasional decline to the obvious, as, for instance, when he writes: "You see, daughters will go sweetheating, and they will even get married." But what can have induced him to imagine that Henley was the author of the line, "Where's Troy—and where's the Maypole in the Strand?"

The Engraved Designs of William Blake. By Laurence Binyon. Benn. £6 6s. Edition de Luxe £12 12s.

THIS magnificent volume is a companion to the late Mr. Darrell Figgis's 'Paintings of William Blake' issued by the same publishers in 1925. It is a sumptuously bound folio with twenty plates in colour and sixty-two in collotype. The text consists of short introductory notes by Mr. Binyon, an authority who needs no recommendation, and a *catalogue raisonné* of Blake's engraved work. Mr. Binyon modestly confines himself to a discussion of Blake's technical methods, a brief exposition of his myth and an account of his ideals in book making. In beauty, in value to the Blake lover, in accuracy and in timeliness, it is immeasurably important, and everyone who can afford it should. It is fitting that the neglected master should at last be honoured in the way he would most have appreciated, in being made the subject of such superb books as these two volumes and the Nonesuch edition of his writings.

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Modern Psychology and Education. By Mary Sturt and E. C. Oakden. Kegan Paul. 7s. 6d.

THIS well deserves the commendatory Foreword by Mr. Raymond, the Warden of Goldsmith's College. It is an exceedingly fresh summary of familiar psychological principles in their application to teaching, and seems to us to have far more common sense and concreteness than many more ambitious works. It is excellently illustrated from fiction, and there are good questions for study-groups appended to every chapter. Its great merit is that it recognizes the importance of the teacher's psychology not less than that of his (or her) charges. We think it will be found very useful.

The Phoenix Nest. Edited by Hugh Macdonald. Etchells and Macdonald. 18s.

MR. HUGH MACDONALD, who has already edited the Elizabethan miscellany, 'England's Helicon,' now adds, in a very attractive form, 'The Phoenix Nest,' an anthology published in 1593 by one "R. S." of the Inner Temple. A few of the contributors are marked by their initials; Lodge and Breton were the leaders and the Earl of Oxford could turn a verse in the mode. But there is too much of mode and too little of mood in this collection, which appears to have been derived mainly from the Oxford wits. Then, as now, a University education does not make a lyric and some of these songs and sonnets have about as much emotional content as a proposition of Euclid. They are monotonous in conceit and formal in phrase and, were it not for the magic power of the word Elizabethan, they would have remained in a proper obscurity. Regarded, however, as a collector's piece this book will serve, for its appearance is admirable.

The Adventures of a Trafalgar Lad. By John Lesterman. Cape. 7s. 6d.

THE title of this stirring story is not very happily chosen; the Battle of Trafalgar only occupies the first two pages, and the hero candidly admits having been too busy with his duties as powder-monkey to get more than a fleeting glimpse of "those leagues of sea covered with great ships raining down fire and destruction on one another." His real adventures began the day after the battle when he was sent off in a prize which was promptly recaptured by the Frenchmen left on board, who then for some mysterious reason proceeded to massacre their Spanish allies and companions in misfortune, after which they "went upon the account," to use the pleasant old euphemism for piracy. The hero is an engaging and ingenuous lad, who narrates his experiences among these, and later among more thorough-going pirates, in a lively manner. He is a worthy successor to Percival Keene and Jim Hawkins, or at least to the creations of Ballantyne, Kingston and Henty. The incident in which he was not only marooned but buried alive as a destined prey for the land-crabs is extremely exciting, and the illustration of his successor's fate even more so.

Victorian Jottings. By Sir James Crichton-Browne. Etchells and Macdonald. 15s.

THOUGH now in his eighty-seventh year, Sir James Crichton-Browne remains one of the most vigorous octogenarians in this country, and there are passages in this book which testify to the fact that he still follows with interest and sympathy all modern movements. For many years past he has been in the habit of jotting down in a common-place book things overheard, things read and personal memories. The present volume has been selected from its pages. Here will be found stories of Gladstone, Browning, Carlyle, Lord Lister and many other "eminent Victorians." On one page Sir James records that Carlyle once said of Gladstone that he had "an unfortunate faculty of believing whatever tends to his own advantage"; on another we read—not without interest—on the authority of Browning, that the decline in the popularity of Tupper was due to an attack which was launched on that now discredited poet in the pages of the SATURDAY REVIEW. "Old age," writes Sir James, in a brief note on the subject, "ought to be the harvest of life; it is the mellowest season." A certain mellowiness does indeed attach to these genial reminiscences, which represent the harvest of an industrious and well-spent life.

Billy the Kid. By Walter Noble Burns. Bles. 10s. 6d.

MR. BURNS has trenched soil which will be virgin for most English readers in this biography of one of the most remarkable of American desperadoes. "Billy the Kid" was what was technically known in New Mexico as a "bad man," and in the fifty years that have elapsed since his death such a mass of stories have been attached to his name that he is destined "to be transformed by popular legend into the Robin Hood of New Mexico." He killed his first man at the age of twelve, and was only twenty-one when he was himself shot down, with at least twenty-one authenticated murders on the place where his conscience might have been. Mr. Burns has laboured conscientiously to obtain all possible facts about Billy's career and about the "Lincoln County War" among the cattle kings and the rustlers' rival gangs in the late 'seventies. He has studied his documents on the spot, and gives a most entertaining picture of that curious and all but forgotten episode in the development of the South. Mr. Burns is an excellent writer, and few who take this book in hand will be able to lay it aside unfinished.

THE CONNOISSEUR

PORT: THE ENGLISHMAN'S WINE

THE perfect harmony of port with the English temperament and the traditional English Christmas has become a common-place, and there is a pleasant contrast between the conditions in which it is drunk in our northern climate and those which accompany the gathering of the grapes and their pressing in the Douro valley. A glass of port is always associated in the minds of those who have taken part in the vintage with certain sounds utterly alien from any of the noises we are wont to hear in this country. The ghostly creaking of the ungreased wheels of the bullock carts, which run up and down the scale in the strangest way and is almost musical since it is produced by the friction of wood against wood, innocent of metal, haunts all the rejoicings of the vintage. These carts carry pipes of wine and brandy along narrow mountain tracks where for half a mile or more there may be no room to pass and the piercing scream of the wheels which can be heard a mile away gives warning of the cart's approach. Moreover the oxen are said to rejoice in the shrill squeaks and to pull more heartily when the wheels are not greased.

* *

Another sound which pervades the vintage is the slow eccentric beat of a distant melancholy drum. The Portuguese peasant is never really happy unless he has within reach of his hand a drum on which he beats at irregular intervals. Such memories lend an additional charm to the port which is the grand finale of the English Christmas dinner. It may be that the host prefers tawny port, which has gained its colour and lightness from years in pipes of good Balkan oak in the Oporto Lodges, to a vintage port which owes its deeper purples and generous richness to years spent over here in the magic seclusion of the bottle. The best tawny port in the world is drunk by the shippers themselves in Oporto, where vintage port which is bottled in England two or three years after the vintage is virtually unknown. A blend of ancient and excellent wines, it is in the land of its origin almost a beverage, and in the vintage I have known it drunk with soda-water "pour la soif."

* *

Tawny port is blended from the wines of many years, and if its quality is to be maintained the shipper must have at his disposal ample stocks of matured wines. These reserves are the port problem of the day. There has been a great increase in the consumption of port, and vintages in Portugal, as elsewhere, have been short for a good many years. A bumper year is now over-due and it is badly needed to keep up the reserves.

* *

Vintage port is the unblended product of a single good vintage which, after two years or so in the wood, matures slowly in the bottle until the wine and the brandy which has checked its fermentation have wrestled mightily together, cast off their impurities and coalesced to form the wine most dear to the sportsman's heart. The great increase in the demand for ports from the wood and the shortage of stocks has reacted on vintage ports. Shippers can as a rule only ship a vintage which is not only of first-rate quality but also sufficiently abundant to replenish their reserves. Consequently vintage port is scarce. If 1900 counts with the nineteenth century, the best vintages of this century are 1904, 1908 and 1912. Only two 1911's were shipped, but they are to-day very delightful wines with a character of their own. The 1917's

can be drunk to-day, though they should remain in the cellar for several more years, and one friend of mine, a past master in the art of blending, holds that they will become a noble wine.

H. WARNER ALLEN

LITERARY NOTES

THE third volume of Professor Allardyce Nicoll's history of post-Restoration drama, which is coming from the Cambridge University Press, concludes a laborious and in many ways valuable piece of work. The standards of scholarship and industry set in regard to histories of English drama by Ward and by Mr. Chambers are upheld, we may safely assume. But some may wonder if the minor productions of the eighteenth century, if in drama or in other branches of literature, deserve quite the attention they have lately been receiving.

* *

The Cambridge University Press is also issuing the *Collected Papers of Sir James Dewar*. This work, which will be in two volumes, will include some of the scientific papers written by Sir James Dewar in association with others.

* *

Messrs. Gerald Howe have in preparation for early issue a volume which throws much new light on the character and private life of Queen Victoria. This work, edited by the Dean of Windsor, contains the correspondence of his aunt, Lady Augusta Stanley, with his mother, Lady Frances Baillie. Lady Augusta was intimately associated with the Duchess of Kent and afterwards with Queen Victoria, and the *Letters of Lady Augusta Stanley* promise to be of exceptional interest, giving the Queen's intimate views on political events, and the Prince Consort's opinion of some of the British Ministers abroad.

* *

Though periodicals hardly come within the category of books, we may stretch a point to mention together several issues of the *Theatre Arts Monthly*, the excellent American publication. The illustrations of stage settings and of actors and actresses not already over-photographed for the gossip Press would alone make issues of this paper worth notice, but there are also in each number some good articles on new methods and tendencies.

* *

Two important new books of artistic interest come to us from Messrs. Putnam. Alas! they come without any indication of price, a little point about which publishers seem to be growing ever more careless. One is Mr. H. Longhurst's book on *English Ivories*, the other is Mr. Herbert Read's book on *English Stained Glass*. Both are lavishly and well illustrated. We may perhaps draw special attention to the illustration in the former of the 'Christ on the Cross,' recently acquired by the Victoria and Albert Museum, a great masterpiece of early fourteenth-century English carving which can have but few rivals. That is the kind of illustration which, besides gratifying collectors, will send the ordinary reader hurrying to see the original.

* *

An agreeable and useful addition to Messrs. Nelson's English Series, the volumes in which cost but two shillings each, is *Nine Modern Plays*, containing examples of the work of Mr. Galsworthy, Sygne, and others, with practical and copious notes on production by Mr. John Hampton.

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75-FT. TWIN SCREW MOTOR YACHT. Two saloons, one mahogany panelled, other convertible double cabin, making 3 double, 1 single, large light staterooms, ex-saloon and f'c'sle; galley 12 ft. x 5 ft. Spring mattresses, carpets, cushions, curtains, etc. Schooner rigged, with funnel on fidlay. Two 60 h.p. Parsons' paraffin engines, giving 11 knots. In full commission. Seen Thames. Open to any survey. Splendid seaboat. Smart appearance. £1,500. Deferred payments arranged. Folio M1,051.

SAIL

360-TON (about) TWIN SCREW THREE-MASTED SCHOONER, built of steel, 1902. 118 ft. B.P., 27 ft. beam. Deckhouse, saloon, 5 staterooms. Twin Parsons paraffin engines. A fine ocean-going vessel for sale at a moderate price. Seen Solent. Folio A1,298.

102-TON AUX. SCHOONER, 90 ft. x 16 ft. 6 ins. x 6 ft. draught. Built of steel 1921. Hot bulb engine. Electric light. Two saloons, 4 staterooms, bath, etc. Excellent sea-boat. Seen Holland. Price £5,000. Folio A1,297.

50-TON KETCH, built and designed by Fife; oak, pine and teak; 64 ft. 8 ins. O.A., 13 ft. 3 ins. beam, 6 ft. 9 ins. draught. Nethercote sails in splendid condition. Standing and running gear as new; 2 dinghies; 3 cabins, 1 double and 2 single, 4 berths; 6 ft. headroom; 2 additional berths on saloon settees; 4 bunks in forecabin; good pantry; 3 w.c.'s; 2 baths under cabin floor. Everything in splendid condition. Price £1,800. Folio S1,001.

64-TON AUX. YAWL. Built by celebrated builders to design of C. E. Nicholson, in 1902, of teak. Saloon, 4 staterooms, etc. Lead keel and ballast. Kelvin 4-cylinder engine. Electric light. Seen Essex. Price £5,000. Folio A1,141.

MOTORING

COMPULSORY INSURANCE

By H. THORNTON RUTTER

MOTORISTS are beginning to wonder whether another year will elapse before fresh legislation in regard to motor vehicles is passed by the Houses of Parliament. It is now some two years since the Motor Vehicles Bill was first mentioned, and beyond the hope expressed by Col. Wilfred Ashley, the Minister of Transport, that this Bill could be presented before Parliament next session, little progress has been made in amending the Motor Car Act of 1903 to conform to the modern needs of road users. It is understood that this Bill will be of an "omnibus" character and concern not only traffic matters, but also compulsory insurance against third party risks by all owners of motor vehicles. I hope this will include motor-cyclists; quite recently a side-car motor-cycle combination ran into a stationary motor-car, damaging the radiator, front axle and wings of this car, and the motor-cyclist had neither means to pay for the damage, nor was he insured against such accidents. But this is a mild instance when compared to the case of the unfortunate breadwinner of a family who was killed by a light van which carried no insurance policy against such risks, and the owner of which had no means whatever to compensate the widow and orphans who were left penniless. Col. Ashley, in the House of Commons, said he was fully aware of such circumstances, and it was just these which were being taken into account in considering the details of the Bill, which he hoped he would be enabled to introduce next year.

This answer brought forth the comment from another member: "Why wait until next year?" Many reasons have been given at one time and another for the constant postponement of this Bill, which is, in fact, due to its wide application and various controversial factors. But it is to be hoped that however Parliament may see fit to deal with many of its clauses, that section enacting that every owner of a power-driven vehicle—which would include motor-cycles, motor-cars, trams and tractors, and possibly aeroplanes—must insure against third party risks, and will be passed without hesitation. In fact, it is suggested that thirty-three per cent. of the one and three-quarter million motors licensed to use the roads to-day are not insured. Mr. Macquisten asked in the House whether it was not a fact that the proprietors of the London omnibus had to take out a third party policy against accidents which covered everything that might happen. Was it not rather hard that if one was killed by a motor-omnibus in Glasgow, or elsewhere outside London, one got nothing, but if one had the good fortune to be killed by a London omnibus one got damages? And the Minister of Transport replied that he was as fully aware of these facts as was Mr. Macquisten and he was considering all relevant facts in deciding the details of the Bill. I give these instances to draw attention to the fact that compulsory third party insurance is already in force for the London motor-omnibuses. But however sympathetic the attitude of the Government may be on this matter of compulsory insurance no pledges have been given that such a clause will be part of the Bill. It is for that reason that the attention of the public should be drawn to the risks they run outside London, and in the Metropolis itself as regards other vehicles than omnibuses. Every effort must be made to extract pledges from Parliamentary representatives to support compulsory insurance for motor-vehicles.

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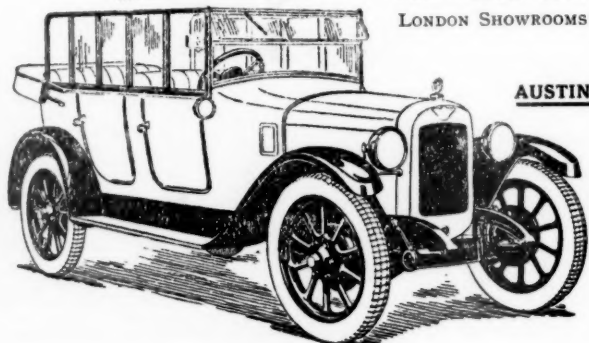
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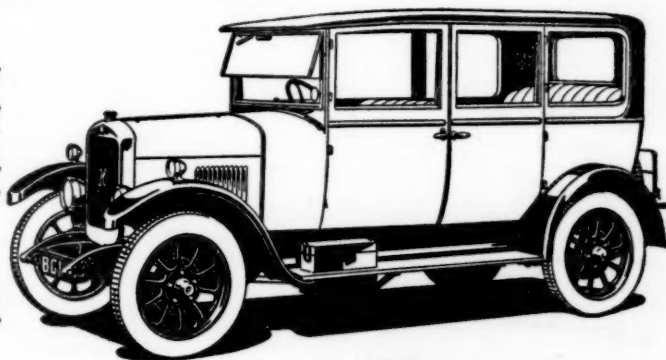
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CITY NOTES

Lombard Street, Thursday

AS was only to be expected, markets this week have developed that festive atmosphere which is associated with the time of year. The Stock Exchange, however, closes down for the holiday in a mood of decided optimism. The opinion is freely expressed that early in the New Year there will be a reduction in the Bank Rate. The ill-effects of the coal strike have been fully appreciated, and while such regrettable incidents as the Armstrong-Whitworth moratorium emphasizes the losses that have been made, the opinion is gaining ground that these unfortunate results deal with the past, and the future holds promise of industrial peace and general trade improvement. One factor, to my mind, is obvious at the moment, and that is that the leaders of industry are devoting more energy than heretofore to the exploration of channels likely to improve not merely industrial financial results, but industrial conditions throughout the country. The shares of electrical and telephone companies are a good market and should improve in the New Year, while in many other directions there are signs of increasing activity.

TOBACCO

Attention has frequently been drawn in these notes to the flourishing condition of the tobacco industry. Recently the Carreras Company, by the declaration of a bonus and a large dividend, emphasized this fact. If further proof was required it was forthcoming in the British American Tobacco figures for the year ended October 31 last. Despite the increase of capital caused by the recent bonus, the total dividend for the year has been brought up to 25% free of tax. The net profits amount to £6,195,000, which is over £1,000,000 higher than those shown in the previous year. After allowing for the dividend disbursements, over £2,000,000 is carried forward. The shares of an ever-expanding business such as this do not look over-valued on a 5% free of tax basis. I therefore think that Bats are well worth buying at anything under 100s. Mention of Bats naturally brings to mind the shares of the Imperial Tobacco Company. Considerable patience has been necessary in waiting for a bonus on Imps, which I think most certainly should be forthcoming in the first quarter of 1927. I hear that Imps have in no way lagged behind the other companies, and that when their figures are presented they will be found to have enjoyed a phenomenally good year.

TIN

The tin share market has been somewhat disappointing. Despite the strength of the metal the public confidence has not been wholly established, with the result that when tin rises tin shares hardly respond, but when the metal falls a few pounds a ton, tin shares are immediately pressed for sale by nervous holders. I see no reason to anticipate that the price of the metal will break badly, as I hear of constantly increasing demands for the metal, and I see no new field greatly increasing supplies. I can only repeat what I have frequently said during the past year, that good producing tin mining companies must be making magnificent profits with the metal anywhere

near its present price, and I advise holders of these Malayan shares to retain their holdings. Early in the New Year the figures of the Tin Selection Trust will be published. I anticipate they will bring the yearly disbursement in dividends up to 12½% and that a strong financial position will be disclosed. Turning to the Nigerian Tin section, I still consider Northern Nigeria Bauchi Pref. a thoroughly sound holding, and of the newer companies I look to Associated to display speculative activity, particularly in view of the fact that I understand plans are being made for the flotation of two subsidiary companies in the reasonably near future.

INVERESK PAPER

The shares of the Inveresk Company have been in strong demand of late. This is partly attributable to the fact that certain of the Company's assets have appreciated very largely in value. I refer to the Koholyt shares and certain other German interests acquired by the Inveresk Company early this year. It may be remembered that these assets were handed over to the International Pulp and Chemical Company, Ltd., in which the Inveresk Company hold 400,000 ordinary shares of £1 each. Negotiations are now proceeding as to the sale of these assets. The price asked by the Inveresk Company if received will probably cause Inveresk shares to rise to £6. Their value subsequently will largely depend on what the directors propose to do with their quota of this large sum, which will be divided between the Inveresk Company and the holders of the Preference shares in the International Pulp and Chemical Company if the deal goes through.

NEWSPAPER SHARES

Considerable interest has been shown of late in newspaper shares. Some months ago I drew attention to the potentialities of *Daily Mirror* shares as a permanent investment, since which the price has appreciated considerably. Those who favour an investment in this market should consider the advisability of locking away a few of these shares, and also *Sunday Pictorial* Ordinary shares.

UNDERGROUNDS

Discussion as to the control of traffic and travelling facilities in London has once more turned in the direction of the formation of a combine to embrace the entire London passenger transport. There is little doubt that sooner or later this policy will have to be adopted. The difficulty at the moment would appear to be the grave doubt whether an adequate return on any new capital required for extensions would be forthcoming. A way out of the difficulty must eventually be found, and those who are prepared to wait will probably find when it arrives that the Underground electric shares, the price of which is at the present in the neighbourhood of 12s., will be worth considerably more. Another company who would have to enter the combine would be Tillings. I have in the past frequently referred to Tillings' Ordinary shares, which I favour on their merits at the present price, irrespective of the added value which this possibility gives them.

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Company Meeting

CARRERAS, LTD.

The twenty-third annual general meeting of Carreras, Ltd., was held on December 20 at Arcadia Works, 238 City Road, E.C.2., Mr. Bernhard Baron (chairman and managing director) presiding.

The Chairman said: Ladies and gentlemen,—I am pleased to be with you again, and take great pleasure in congratulating you on the year's business of the company. As you see, the available balance is £1,390,000, which is no doubt a record in the tobacco trade considering the small amount of capital with which we started and the small amount of cash that has ever been put into the business from outside.

Some of the shareholders who have held shares since the inception of the company will remember that fifteen or eighteen or, maybe, twenty years ago, I told them that the company had not touched the fringe of the business which I hoped in time we should get—well, I may tell you now that we have only just about touched the end of the fringe, as the future is just as great as it has ever been, and our business for the two months of the new year is larger than it has ever been in any corresponding period, and I am satisfied that, as far as I can see, we will have a much better year this year than we did last year.

I cannot help but repeat again that we have as loyal a body of workers as any employer could desire, and I am pleased to bear testimony to the splendid efforts they have put forth during the past year. They work hard and they work cheerfully, and take a real interest in co-operating for the progress of the business, and I think as shareholders, we should all be thankful to them—and I go still further and say—that if all the manufacturers would treat their workers well, pay them a good living wage so that they could have what they want in their homes, they would not alone have happiness, but they would make more money.

I now move that the directors' report and statement of accounts as at October 31, 1926, now submitted to this meeting be, and the same are hereby received and adopted. That a dividend of 35 per cent., free of income tax, on the ordinary and "A" ordinary shares be, and the same is hereby declared, making with the interim dividend of 15 per cent. paid in June last, 50 per cent. free of income tax for the year. Such dividends to be payable to all ordinary and "A" ordinary shareholders appearing on the register on December 6, 1926, the date on which the share register was closed.

Mr. Louis D. Baron seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

NATIONAL REVIEW

Edited by L. J. Maxse. December, 1926. Price 3s. net.

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By ARTHUR KITSON

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By CAPTAIN V. A. CAZALET, M.P.

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ACROSTICS

PUBLISHER'S PRIZE

For the Acrostic Competition there is a weekly prize:—A Book (selected by the competitor) reviewed in that issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW in which the problem was set, presented by the publisher.

RULES

1. The price of the book chosen must not exceed a guinea; it must be named by the solver when he sends his solution, and be published by a firm whose name appears on the list printed on the Competition Coupon.

2. The coupon for the week must be enclosed.

3. Envelopes must be marked "Competition," and addressed to the Acrostic Editor, SATURDAY REVIEW, 9 King Street, London, W.C.2.

Competitors not complying with these Rules will be disqualified.

Award of Prizes.—When solutions are of equal merit, the result will be decided by lot.

Under penalty of disqualification, competitors must intimate their choice of book when sending solutions.

To avoid the same book being chosen twice, books mentioned in 'Literary Notes' (which, in many instances, are reviewed at length in a subsequent issue of the paper) are not eligible as prizes.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 249

CHRISTMAS-DAY HAS COME AGAIN:
WHEN WILL IT BRING THESE TO MEN?

1. What recks the falcon of my tuneful notes?
2. Implies an entry into ships or boats.
3. Shows height: an emperor and I are in it.
4. May reach America within a minute.
5. Detestable—but see, it holds a shell-fish!
6. A good one to accept, why call it selfish?
7. Transpose what grew a weed, yet makes man's life.
8. I. Milton's day a cause of civil strife.
9. This by its English name more sweet won't smell.
10. The troop dismissed, the strip will do quite well.
11. Six shillings sterling is or was its worth.
12. Each wife of course thinks hers the best on earth.

Solution of Acrostic No. 247

J	anu	S ¹	1	January, consecrated to Janus, is the first
O	intmen	T ²		month of the year according to the present computation. In England, New
S	atellit	E		Year's Day was March 25 till 1752.
E	gg-cu	P	2	"Dead flies cause to stinke, and putrifie
P	loug	H		the oymntment of the apothecarie."
H	oroscop	E		Eccles. x, 1 (Geneva Bible)
C	arrio	N		Chis ³ The sense of death is most in apprehen-
O	r	R		sion;
N	omenclato	A		And the poor beetle, that we tread upon,
R	edow	N ³		In corporal sufferance finds a pang as great
A	pprehensio	E		As when a giant dies.
D	iminutiv			Measure for Measure. Act iii, Sc. 1.

ACROSTIC No. 247.—The winner is Mr. G. W. H. Iago, Sussex House, Cedar Row, Sutton, Surrey. He has chosen as his prize, 'Gifts of Fortune,' by H. M. Tomlinson, published by Heinemann, and reviewed in our columns on December 11, under the title 'The Art of Travel.' Twenty-seven other competitors chose this book; twelve named 'Good-bye Stranger,' etc., etc.

ACROSTIC No. 246.—Two Lights Wrong: Mrs. R. H. Boothroyd, Chip, I. Dyson, Eyelet, Farsdon, Cyril E. Ford.

BORDYKE, J. CHAMPERS, DHUALT, ISLANDERS, MURIEL MALVERN, G. W. MILLER, P. C. SANDS, STANFIELD.—Please choose books published by firms in our list on Coupon, as otherwise you lose your chance of winning a prize.

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